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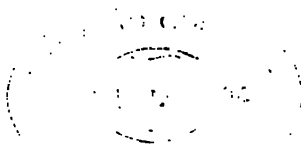
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A CAMPAIGN
WITH
THE TURKS IN ASIA.

CHAPTER I.

THE EUXINE.

ON the 17th of January, 1854, I left Constantinople, then wrapped in all the gloom of winter, and embarked on board the Austrian Lloyd steamer *Asia* bound for Trebizond. My original intention of joining the army of the Danube, with which I had been animated on leaving England, had succumbed to the superior attractions offered by a campaign in Asia. To gratify this preference I now found myself steaming slowly down the Bosphorus, with my heart beating high at the prospect of visiting Armenia, Persia, perhaps Georgia, all of which countries appeared at that time to my sanguine imagination adorned with the brilliant hue of Eastern romance.

The steam-ship *Asia* had on board a heavy freight of manufactured goods destined for Persia, and a considerable number of passengers. The latter consisted chiefly of small traders and artisans, who had left their native Asia without a piastre to seek their fortunes in Stamboul, and were now returning with jingling bags of coin in their pockets, and happy visions of future peace and content in their minds, once again to see fond familiar faces, and to pass their old age free from toil in the homes of their youth.

It was a most pleasing sight to observe these good people congregating together, talking over past hardships in Stamboul, showing each other their hard-earned savings, and laughing with joy at the pleasure they anticipated in again seeing their native land.

From Trebizond, Samsoon, Sinope, and along the shores of the Black Sea, from 12,000 to 16,000 poor labourers annually emigrate to Constantinople, where they are distinguished for their honesty and hard working disposition. Some of these are fortunate enough to amass a little sum of money, with which, like the individuals above, they return to their friends, who receive them with that respect which great travellers, and particularly travelled capitalists, generally inspire.

The great man on board, however, was a Pacha,

who, with a large suite and his harem, and an amazing number of boxes, trunks, and small packages belonging to the latter, was proceeding to Trebizond.

The whole of the ladies' cabin had been engaged by the Pacha for his harem, where its members were safe under lock and key. Until we entered the Euxine, the ladies however remained on deck, where a partition had been railed off for their sole occupancy, and an extempore divan prepared for their reception. The harem was composed of some fifteen women with their elderly attendants, and black women slaves. Three or four of the faces were most beautiful, lighted up by long-lashed oriental eyes, and with the bracing air of Circassia still blooming on their cheeks. They conversed but little among themselves, a fact worthy of remark, and seemed absorbed in thinking about nothing in particular. In this placid and agreeable occupation they were distanced by their elderly female attendants, who were sleeping quietly with their heads between their knees. The only individuals of the whole party who gave any animated signs of life were the negro women, who, with the loquacity peculiar to their race and their sex, were chattering away, and perpetually running from the deck to the cabin, without any particular object or result attending their excursions. Their spare time was



of the Giaours to mystify the faculties of true believers.

We quickly passed the white castle of Raomely, the narrowest part of the strait, where Mahomed the Second crossed to the conquest of Constantinople, and where Darius is said to have established a bridge of boats which enabled him to invade Thrace and Scythia. At Buyukdere we passed the Turco-Egyptian fleet at anchor, and the appearance of the vessels, both with regard to order and strength, was most satisfactory. At Beycos a shoal of dolphins were sporting and leaping about in the same place where the Anglo-French fleet made their long and inglorious stay. We soon left behind us the lovely panorama of the Bosphorus, and at length entered the treacherous Euxine. Here considerable animation was soon observable on deck. As the steamer began to roll and plunge the harem retired to their cabin, whilst the mirth and joviality of the successful traders considerably declined. A party of Turkish officers who, in open defiance of the laws of the Prophet, had been imbibing large quantities of raki, and were already walking unsteadily, now found the unsteadiness in question to receive an undoubted impulsion. They were soon sprawling on deck moaning miserably; a warning to all good Mussulmans against spiritual indulgence and—sea-sickness.

For my own part I speedily retreated below, and

awaited with resignation my miserable fate, which I knew was approaching. In order to stave off the fatal moment I attempted to awake a train of reflection on the varied events which these waters and the shores they wash have witnessed. The chequered reign of Mithridates—the campaigns of Darius—the mysterious cruise of our old friend Jason—the memorable retreat of Xenophon and his ten thousand, alone rendered interesting every spot on the coast. We were now passing in sight of the Cyanean rocks, which are not only remarkable for being, with one exception, the only ones of any height visible in the Black Sea, but are chiefly to be remembered as having thrown such consternation into the hearts of the Argonauts, whose hopes, fears, sacrifices, libations, and (with the aid of Minerva) whose final triumph, have been described with such classic grace and minuteness by old Apollonius of Rhodes. The bard has certainly indulged in an extreme poetic license in describing in so terrible a light the great dangers incurred by Jason and his illustrious crew on this spot. A slight touch of the helm would have placed the mariners in safety, without having put them under any obligation to Minerva, for the said rocks form but an insignificant cluster, some thirty feet high. We now began to experience rather boisterous weather, whilst the rain fell in torrents. The coast of Thracia has the reputation of being extremely

picturesque, but a thick mist had settled over the mountain heights, whilst the gloom of a January night soon cast all in darkness.

The following morning at daybreak we arrived in sight of unhappy Sinope. I had been animated with the hope of encountering there the Allied fleet which a few days before had sailed from Beycos.

In the deserted harbour not an English or French vessel was to be seen.

Sinope from the deck of the steamer presented a most forlorn appearance. Not that the long straggling town had apparently suffered much, but the interior of the harbour offered terrible evidence of the catastrophe it had witnessed a few weeks before.

The tragedy of Sinope is too recent to warrant a detailed account of the destruction of the Turco-Egyptian fleet. The cry of horror which that frightful butchery aroused in every human heart still rings in our ears.

As soon as the steamer had cast out her anchor I accompanied the captain to the Austrian Vice-consul, who was the only European in Sinope. He informed us that the Allied fleet had returned to Constantinople the previous day. Along the narrow street which lines the beach and leads to the Austrian consulate we beheld the havoc which the shot and shell of the Russians had committed. The beach there was strewn with pieces of wreck and ships'

boats. Large orifices in the houses betrayed where round shot had penetrated. The house of the Austrian Vice-Consul had been pierced by three balls, which had the effect of driving that official to the cellar, where he wisely remained until the cessation of the cannonade. A female servant belonging to the consulate, who had ventured into the garden met her death by a round shot, which had cut her body in two. The harbour itself presented a sad scene of misery. The projecting masts of the Turkish vessels betrayed the position where they had sunk, and around them floated a confused mass of cordage, wreck, and disfigured human corpses. On proceeding up the hills which command the town, and where a battery had been constructed, the scene of destruction was terrible to witness. Immense masses of wreck, cordage, and even whole cannon on their carriages were strewn about the earth, having been projected by the strength of the explosions to that incredible height and distance. Particles of clothing were clinging to the wet ground, and from places where a little earth had been sprinkled over, pieces of human flesh and mangled arms and legs were visible, whilst herds of dogs were preying on the foul remains of the late unfortunate Turkish mariners.

The Turkish land-batteries which defended Sinope had been wretchedly constructed, and numbered three. One situated in the centre of the port close

to an old Genoese castle, consisted of six large pieces; but it was unable to take part in the action, being covered by the Turkish vessels. The two others outside the town to the right, likewise mounted six cannons each, but were of very small calibre when opposed to the huge Russian Paixhans. Of these two batteries, one was enabled, by the sinking of an Egyptian frigate, to open on the enemy, and was served until he retired. Of this battery, manned by forty-three gunners of whom six were killed, only one piece was dismounted, though the parapets were destroyed and the surrounding earth covered with Russian balls. Since the departure of the Russians the Turks had been at work planning new fortifications, and we must hope they will have derived a salutary lesson from their late calamity.

Although the Russians projected red-hot shot, it does not seem that the destruction of the Turkish quarter of the town, within the enclosure of the Genoese castle walls, can be attributed to them. It would appear that the burning masses of the Ottoman vessels, hurled by repeated explosions, fell on that spot, and easily fired the old wooden buildings, many of which were above two hundred years old. I believe the number of houses burnt on that occasion, to have been three hundred. The castle is of Genoese construction, and offers no point for modern defence. The inhabitants of Sinope had received, a

few days before we arrived, a gift of 250,000 piastres (about 2100*l.*) from the Sultan, as a slight compensation for their loss and sufferings.

The inhabitants spoke very highly of the generosity displayed by the English officers and men, who, considering the shortness of their stay, had spent a considerable sum there (exceeding the amount allowed by the Sultan), so that altogether the townspeople, who had survived, were gainers by the calamity which had befallen the Turkish fleet.

Owing to the threatening appearance of the weather, the captain resolved to remain at Sinope another day, which was a measure of precaution hardly justifiable, and most annoying to the passengers.

Apart from the late catastrophe, sustained by the Ottoman navy, which has thrown a temporary interest over Sinope, that town possesses but few attractions, and has the reputation, which I can substantiate, of being the dullest spot on the Black Sea.

The weather, instead of clearing up, became more boisterous, so that I began to despair of quitting this unpleasant place, and, my mind was made most uneasy, on reflecting that the English steamer, which was to have left Constantinople after us, would probably arrive at Trebizond the first. I had left by the earlier boat in the certainty of arriving the first,

and of being enabled to engage horses for Erzeroum before the numerous passengers, by the English boat, had "spoiled the market."

Notwithstanding the rain, which fell in torrents, I preferred going on shore to remaining on board, so I again went over the late scene of carnage. In trying to pass along the beach, near the lower battery, I was repulsed by the foul stench, proceeding from human remains, which the Turks had not yet had the decency—not to speak of common sense—to bury. Every fresh step I made, and every piece of information gleaned from the inhabitants, proved at the same time the lamentable ignorance and stupidity of the Ottoman commanders, and the heroic fortitude displayed by their crews.

After being detained by the boisterous state of the sea for two days at Sinope, we at length put on steam, and, on the 20th January, continued our voyage. The wind was contrary, and the sea ran so high, that on reaching Samsoon we were unable to land the goods freighted for that place, and were obliged to take them on to Trebizond.

Samsoon possesses a considerable commerce, chiefly in tobacco, of which large quantities are exported to Constantinople, and also to Trebizond. The climate is most unhealthy, and impregnated with fever.

In the roads of Samsoon we lay rolling for twenty-eight hours, and on the 23rd January, after a voyage

of seven days, instead of the ordinary three, did we arrive in sight of Trebizond. The steamer anchored in the roads; large beach boats, with four rowers, conveyed the passengers to the land, and dismounting from the shoulders of two powerful fellows, who conveyed me over the surf to the shore, I set foot in the ancient capital of Pontus, the land of Mithridates the Great.

Indescribable was the confusion in which I left the *Asia's* decks. The delight of the harem, in being released from the cabin, in which its fair forms had been confined, was excessive. The lamentation of the noisy children, who were alternately cuffed by the sailors for incumbering their passage, and by the successful traders for treading on their toes, did not tend to allay the noise created by the black women, who were attempting to collect the wonderful accumulation of baggage. The picturesque appearance of Trebizond, which struck me so much on my return in the summer, was now subdued by the white sheet of snow, which covered alike the town and the surrounding hills.

CHAPTER II.

TREBIZOND.

I HAD scarcely descended from my high position on the shoulders of the boatmen, than a stout jovial-looking figure pushed through the crowd of natives, and, in broken English, savouring strongly of Genoese, introduced himself as the master of *the* hotel. The idea of finding an establishment of that nature in this little town had never entered my imagination, consequently I received the self-introduction of my future host with the deference it merited. In Turkish, where the Genoese patois likewise seemed to predominate, he ordered the boatmen to take up my baggage, and then led the way triumphantly to *the* hotel. We passed through the best part of the town, which was actually paved, and by far cleaner and more agreeable than odious Pera and Galata. On the way my landlord kept up an incessant conversation, in which I was very gratuitously informed of his previous history and domestic concerns. "My name is Antonio, Milordo.

I come from Genoa, have been twenty-two years in Turkey, and don't understand a word of the language. I am deeply gratified with the honour of Milordo's presence at the hotel. Have not had a soul in it for two months at least." This startling announcement, coupled with the "Milordo," gave me great pecuniary anxiety. "The English consul knows me, Milordo: all the consuls know me: everybody knows Antonio. I have a wife, Milordo, the most abominable temper in the world. You are going to Kars—very bad time—several caravans have been lost in the snow. But she is lame, poor thing, and that has soured her temper. But here we are, my Milordo!" At this juncture of his desultory conversation, my landlord had arrived before a small clean-looking house, enclosed by a high wall. He knocked at the door, a loud barking, evidently proceeding from several little dogs, dominated by a stern voice, issued from the interior. "Is that you, good-for-nothing Antonio!" exclaimed the voice in Italian: "That is the way you go to the bazaar for a quarter of an hour, and then remain there the whole day, leaving *povero mi* alone to work and slave." I cast a glance at poor Antonio, whose jolly smiling face had become sadly overcast at this domestic outbreak. "She is lame, Milordo; and that has soured her temper, poor thing," he repeated to me *sotto voce*, and then aloud he exclaimed, "But, cara Teresa, do not scold. I

met Guiseppe, the little tailor, who would keep me, we played at tresetta, and I won two bottles of Marsala, which we are to drink to night—you know you adore Marsala, carissima Teresa. Besides I have brought home a traveller." This last piece of intelligence caused the door to fly open, and half-a-dozen little curs rushed out to welcome us.

Leaning on a broom, and surveying me with attention, stood Cara Teresa. She was of immense size, with brawny muscular arms, and had the most forbidding countenance I ever beheld. After scrutinising me for some time, this amiable landlady gave a peculiar grunt and limped off into the kitchen. This curious reception, and the oddity of the pair I had before my eyes, proved too much for my gravity, and I burst out into a hearty laugh. In the midst of my hilarity the stern countenance of Teresa peered out from behind the kitchen door, and caught poor Antonio in a peal of laughter, which threatened to shake his burly frame asunder. The basilisk eyes of his wife checked this ill-conditioned mirth with the rapidity of magic, and taking up my baggage he sneaked off, and conducted me to my room.

After this little domestic comedy I was left alone, and having changed my clothes, which the seven days I had slept in them now rendered a luxury, I took with me some letters of introduction and walked out into the town. I first called upon Mr. F. Stevens,

the British vice-consul, to whom I had a letter of recommendation from Lord Redcliffe, and who received me with great kindness and attention. The town of Trebizond was at that moment in great glee from the following cause.

His Excellency, Ismet Pacha, the governor of Trebizond, had that day received a despatch from Selim Pacha, announcing that a proposed attack on Chefketil (St. Nicholas) by the Russians, had not only failed, but that the Russian forces had sustained a severe defeat. The following were the details:—

On Thursday, the 19th of January, 3000 Russians issued from Urzuggetti, and marched on Chefketil. This was their sixth attempt to recapture that fort. They concealed themselves in the jungle, a short distance from the fort, and lay there till night-time when they meditated storming the place.

The Turkish scouts gave timely warning, and the greater part of the garrison issued forth and fell upon the concealed Russians. A scene of slaughter ensued, in which more than two-thirds of the Russians fell, and the remainder withdrew in the greatest disorder and precipitation. The loss on the Turkish side was insignificant, owing to the peculiar nature of the surprise.

Having accepted an invitation to dine in the evening with Mr. Stevens, I procured a guide, who conducted me through a rambling bazaar to the

office of an Armenian merchant, with whom I had business to transact. I found Mr. Alexander Pirjantz at home, and he very kindly offered to procure for me horses and the necessary articles I should require in my journey to Erzeroum. During my whole stay in Asia, that gentleman, who had resided some time in London and Vienna, took charge, in the kindest manner, of my correspondence. The introductions he gave me, to Armenian merchants in the interior of the country, were of the greatest value to me, and, in a word, I have to thank Mr. Pirjantz for great and unwearied civility. Quitting his office, I took a long ramble through the snow-covered streets of the town.

Of all the Eastern cities and towns I had seen, Trebizond (with the exception perhaps of Smyrna), pleased me the most. The streets are broad, the houses clean, with yards and gardens; and, in fact, I was somewhat reminded of an English country town. The mountains in the back: the houses and the streets were all embedded in snow, and the cold was extreme. Trebizond is slightly fortified, much in the same style as Sinope—certainly not better. In 1807 the Russians landed some troops below the town and marched upon it, but they were repulsed and cut to pieces.

Later in the day, accompanied by an officer of the Pacha, I visited the principal battery, situated on an

eminence overhanging the sea, to the left of the town. The battery consisted of guns of heavy calibre and of two 12-inch mortars, with a reserve of similar pieces and of smaller cannon, which were rusting away under a shed. The larger cannon were of an excellent bronze, and, from their position, most formidable. The embrasures were, however, too narrow, and by the slightest deviation from a straight line the fascines would probably have caught fire. Considering the number of cannon with the amount of space in which they were confined, I fear there would not have been sufficient room to have worked them efficiently. A few bombs skilfully thrown into the midst of the battery would have caused great execution, although, from the exceedingly soft nature of the earth, they might have buried themselves harmlessly. This battery is on the surface of a rocky height, rising from the sea, and offers to an enemy but little point of range. At the same time, Trebizond may congratulate herself upon not having received the visit from the Russian fleet, which had been premeditated, but was prevented by the appearance of Sir Edmund Lyons and his steam squadron.

The allied steam fleet, with Turkish ships in convoy, had produced an excellent effect here by its appearance. It convinced the Turkish population of the real sympathy of England; while the size and

imposing aspect of the larger screw ships filled their minds with admiration and awe. Previous to the arrival of the fleet, matters were in a critical state here. Owing to the sympathy, openly expressed, by the Greeks for the cause of the Czar, the Turks were naturally exasperated; and a general massacre, in which all Christians might have been included, seemed inevitable. By the firmness of the Pacha, who was then governor of Trebizond, an able and distinguished man, the storm blew over, and the sight of the friendly fleet re-established the usual calm.

The Greeks were aware of the danger they had drawn upon themselves, and had wonderfully altered their tone. In their mouths the Turks became "good Turks," "brave Turks;" and their greatest wish was to see the "Muscovites eaten up by the noble Turks." This was a most rapid conversion, on the part of the Greek population; but the Turks valued its sincerity at its just point, and perfectly appreciated the motive that had worked the miracle.

Should, unhappily, in the course of the war, any outbreak take place on the part of the Turkish population against the Greek, the inhabitants of Europe will have to make a large allowance for the provocation the Turks may have received; and the Greeks will owe thanks for the persecution they may

suffer to the spirit of intrigue, the base spreading of false, and to the Turks, injurious reports, and to the imprudent sympathy with the enemy which characterises all their steps and conversation.

Notwithstanding what has been written to the contrary, it is a fact, that every man, woman, and child of the Greek race in the Ottoman dominions pray in the bottom of their hearts for the success of the Czar. It is in some the sentiments of religious brotherhood, which connect the two races, that are animated; whilst others, and the greater portion, anticipate some positive political advantage from the success of the Russians. Little do they know the Czar, or greatly do they over-estimate his kind intentions with their regard; and I fear that under Russian dominion they would sigh for their old rulers, the indolent and careless Turk. Before aspiring to be their own masters, the Greeks must acquire many qualifications and virtues, which they certainly do not now possess. It is sad to say, but it is true, that I have not met one intelligent European traveller who has not expressed dislike and contempt for the Hellenic race, and who has not preferred the less intelligent, but, in many respects, noble-hearted Turk.

Sir Edmund Lyons having been in want of fresh provisions for the squadron, was supplied by the Pacha with provisions for eight days, all of which,

however, could not be taken on board in time. The Pacha, with great liberality, refused any remuneration for the same, to the great annoyance of Sir Edmund.

The fleet remained but twenty-four hours here ; but Jack found plenty of time to spend his money, and bran new sovereigns of 1853 were plentiful in the town. On the departure of the vessels, prayers were said in all the mosques for the safe journey and the constant success of their crews.

The Turkish steamers, protected by the squadron, had conveyed to Batoum 1400 regular troops, and had landed here vast quantities of munitions of war, destined for the army of Kars.

Trebizond carries on a commerce of considerable extent. It is the port of transit of goods destined for Persia, and possesses, besides, an important local trade.

To my surprise, I found that while France, Austria, and Russia were here each represented by a consul-general, the commerce of England, whose exports to Trebizond amount annually to the value of a million and a half, had only a vice-consul. It seems most illogical, when the interests of countries having little commerce with the town are fully represented, that England, which has the largest stake, should not be equally so. The following table will testify to the prosperity of Trebizond, by showing

the amount of imports and exports of the year ending 1852 :—

	Imports.	Exports.
In British steamers, &c. . . .	£331,558	£114,556
„ Austrian do.	414,416	101,055
„ Native steamers and other craft .	1,396,168	424,024
„ Russian ditto	6,123	8,077
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	£2,148,265	£647,712
Value of Specie exported (chiefly in Russian coins for Persian account)		£221,503
Ditto for local account		£85,997
Number of Passengers between Trebizond and Con- stantinople		18,180

The transit of merchandise and passengers from Constantinople to Trebizond, was, at that moment, entirely in the hands of the English and Austrian steam-packet companies, who were deriving enormous profits from the large increase of government business and the great demand for freight. Formerly there was a desperate rivalry, reminding one of our railway warfare at home, in which the two notorious companies were both nearly extinguished. The Turkish government commenced running steam-frigates, which took goods and passengers at a reduced tariff, and the competition was increased by the formation of a private Ottoman company. At one time, as might have been expected, freightage was at a ridiculously low price, and passengers were taken for a mere trifle. The Ottoman company had now given in, and the government had some better

—or, if we consult Sinope, a worse—employment for her steam-frigates.

The freights are almost entirely composed of English manufactured goods, part of which remain here, and are smuggled into the Russian province of Georgia; the remainder, consisting chiefly of white calicoes, are sent into Persia, where they are printed, and then introduced into Russia as of Persian manufacture. This accounts for the large exportation of Russian coin for Persian account. Large quantities of silks, raw silks, tobacco, and valuable shawls are exported by the Persian merchants. The latter are exceedingly keen in business, and are generally wealthy, as their expenses of living are but trifling. The richest merchant goes to the Khan, where he can sleep and transact his business at a cost of a few pence.

With considerable difficulty I found my way back to the hotel, and there discovered friend Antonio, assisted by his six dogs, in the act of chasing round the yard a venerable old cock, that evidently was to have figured at my dinner. Having informed him that I had received an invitation, the chase was abandoned, and the old cock, crowing violently with excitement, took refuge on the top of the wall. At the same time, I took the opportunity of telling my host, that my aversion to poultry (the old bird being the only representative of the feathered tribe in the

yard) was intense and ungovernable. I dined with Mr. Stevens and his amiable family, and on returning home experienced a slight attack of fever, to which, however, I paid no attention. I cast a glimpse through the kitchen window in going up stairs, and perceived, sitting round the fire, in a species of armed neutrality, Teresa, Antonio, and the little tailor, Giuseppe, whose Marsala the company were amiably discussing.

On awaking in the morning I found myself in a burning fever, and very unwell. Antonio hastened for a medical man, and shortly introduced a tall, grave, and gentlemanly Italian, who was enveloped in a very large cloak. Having felt my pulse and examined my tongue, the doctor shook his head, a pantomime which greatly alarmed me. He then told me that bleeding would be absolutely necessary, and accordingly produced his lancets, and calmly examined their points. Never having been bled before, and having imbibed decided prejudices against the operation, I stoutly refused to undergo it. All the good doctor's persuasion could not conquer my determination, so, wrapping himself up in his large cloak, he departed, promising to call in the evening. The most attentive nurse could not have behaved kinder than did poor Antonio. With great difficulty I could convince him that I had no appetite, and that beefsteaks with onions and

potatoes, however relishing, was scarcely the diet for a man with a burning fever. Every now and then he paid me a visit, and, in the evening when I lay tossing and rolling in sleepless restlessness, he sat by my bedside, and told me, in all its little details, the humble history of his life. I fell asleep in the course of his narrative. I think it was during his courtship of Teresa, who, it would seem, had not been always lame and unamiable. Several times in the night I awoke, always with the fever raging, and the morning dawned without any sensible improvement. Early in the day, Antonio rushed into my room in an extraordinary state of excitement, with the news that the steamer *Phæbe* had arrived, with several pachas, and a large number of European officers in the Turkish service. Presently an unusual commotion in the hotel proved the truth of the intelligence. Every room was speedily engaged, and Antonio was on the fair road to fortune. Whilst I was in vain endeavouring to dose off, the door of my room opened, and in walked Major Bonfanti, an American officer in the Ottoman service, whose arrival I had awaited in order to start with him for Erzeroum. The expression of his countenance on seeing me stretched on a sick bed was most ludicrous. Having welcomed him warmly, I inquired for all the news, which were to this effect. He had left Constantinople

with Haireddin Pacha, who had been appointed Imperial Commissioner to the army of Kars, and who intended to leave Trebizond, on the following day, for his destination. Major Bonfanti had acquainted the Pacha that an English gentleman was on the point of starting for Kars, and he had kindly invited me to accompany him. An English officer, Colonel Thorne, had likewise arrived from Constantinople, and had received a similar invitation from Haireddin Pacha. By my indisposition I thus risked losing an excellent opportunity of crossing the dangerous mountain range in company. Taking a sudden decision, I sent for the Italian medical man, who soon appeared. I inquired if I should be able to continue my journey on the following day, provided I consented to be bled. He replied, with a shrug of the shoulders, and said, "Mio caro Signor, you had better take the next steamer that returns to Constantinople, and abandon all idea of this winter journey. You will only leave your bones on the road." This pleasant intimation having failed to convince me, I requested him at once to bleed me, and with joyful alacrity he produced his lancet-case. The operation was soon performed, and I decidedly felt much relieved. A calm sleep soon came over me, which lasted until late in the afternoon. In the meanwhile, Major Bonfanti had kindly prepared everything against our departure. He had

engaged horses and muleteers, and had purchased large quantities of warm clothing, which was indispensable. Late in the evening, Haïreddin Pacha sent an aide-de-camp to renew his invitation, and to inform me that, owing to a difficulty in finding sufficient baggage-horses, he would be obliged to defer his departure for a day. This was, indeed, good tidings for me, as I thus had an additional twenty-four hours to recruit my strength. The next day I remained quiet at home, but ventured out in the evening to accustom myself a little to the cold. The Rev. Mr. Twiss, an American missionary established in Trebizond, had kindly sent me an invitation to dinner, of which I availed myself, and I have still a vivid recollection of the wonderful American pasty I had the pleasure of eating that day. I returned home early, packed up the few articles I intended taking with me, and engaged a dragoman. The latter was a Greek of the name of Giorgio, who spoke fluently some ten languages. He was an excellent cook and general servant, and only wanted a few grains of honesty to be the mirror of perfection.

The steamer which had conveyed Haïreddin Pacha to this town, returned that day to Constantinople. On board of her was a criminal, of whose misdeeds the whole population were conversing.

A wealthy Greek merchant and a Turk were both enamoured of a Turkish woman, who had given the preference to her countryman, notwithstanding the brilliant offers made to her by the Greek. Stung with jealousy, the latter invited the Turk (they were friends) to a dinner at his house. The Turk accepted the invitation, and from the moment he entered the house of his host, he was seen no more. A head, which had evidently been decapitated, was washed on shore a few days after, and the features were recognised as belonging to the missing Turk. The Greek was suspected, and, on strict inquiry, it was discovered that the scoundrel had basely murdered his guest. After cutting the body of his victim into small pieces, he had thrown them into the sea. The trial had recently been concluded, and the Greek was condemned to seven years' hard labour in irons in the arsenal of Constantinople. At the expiration of that period, the children of the murdered man will have attained their majority, and will then be called upon to decide on the criminal's fate. They will be at liberty to choose between the man's life or blood-money, which, according to the Koran, is fixed at about 300%.

In order to avoid recognition, and to escape the indignation of the assembled crowd, the rascal had the impudence to put on a black hat on embarking—that uncomfortable head covering being the only

object that inspires a little respect amongst the Turkish population. Some Europeans protested against this desecration of our civilised head dress ; and, covered with his natural coiffure, the criminal was taken on board.



CHAPTER III.

WINTER TRAVELLING IN ASIA.

ON the 31st of January I left Trebizond. At day-break, my dragoman George appeared at my bedside and awoke me. He had put on his travelling costume, which consisted in high European boots, an English sabre, a Circassian dress garnished with cartridge holders, and a pair of five-barrelled pistols. On his head he wore a thick sheepskin cap, and altogether presented a most ferocious appearance. I felt very weak on getting up, but, as there was no remedy, I dressed and prepared to depart. Colonel Thorne and Major Bonfanti arrived to breakfast with me, accompanied by Mr. Stevens and several other friends, who had volunteered to see us safe on our dangerous journey. Presently a great noise was heard in the court-yard, proceeding from the muleteers who had arrived with the baggage-horses, and following them appeared the horses on which we were to travel.

These were received with an ironical shout of laughter, which their melancholy appearance fully

justified. In fact, although we had bargained for post-horses, the animals in question were merely baggage-horses, or, rather horses that had at one time been employed in that occupation; but, either from old age or premature weakness, had been elevated into chargers.

A salute of artillery announced the departure of Haïreddin Pacha, so we hastened to mount. Antonio appeared with his bill, which was absurdly reasonable, and wished us a happy journey. In the midst of a profusion of Turco-Genoese compliments he was checked by the masculine voice of Madame Teresa, who blandly enquired from below how long we were going to keep her holding three horses in the cold.

In order to relieve this interesting female we mounted our steeds, after having put on the numerous fur coats, thick stockings, and comforters, which the nature of the journey demanded. We then said farewell to all assembled friends, and, having seduced our chargers into motion, quitted the hotel. Old Antonio remained for some time standing on the steps outside, waving his cap and shouting, "Bono Viaggio Milordo! Addio Milordo Colonello!! a rivederci Milordo Maggiore!!!"

We soon arrived at the meeting spot appointed by Haïreddin Pacha, who recognised having met me at the Seraskier's palace at Constantinople. Besides the Pacha and his suite were the Polish Generals

Brainski and Bystronowski, and a number of Polish officers engaged in the Turkish service.

Our party increased this number, so that the procession as we wound through the narrow streets would have been imposing, had not the wretched appearance and condition of our steeds (including those of the Generals) detracted from its merits, and made it assume, I must confess, a character more ludicrous than magnificent. The animals on which we were all mounted, excepting the Pacha, whose steed was presentable, were of the leanest and laziest description. Nothing could tempt them into a trot, and whips or spurs were thrown away on their impenetrable hides. Like mountain horses, they possessed the virtue of being sure-footed, and that quality covers many vices; but, invariably on approaching a precipice, of the two paths they persisted in choosing the one nearest the brink, and where the slightest false step would have dashed horse and rider to pieces. Nothing could induce these horses to take the safest side, and to attempt to guide them merely increased the danger. On touching the reins they turned round their noses and commenced sidling towards the abyss, which, to say the least, was highly unpleasant. Nothing remained but to throw the reins on their necks and trust to Providence.

On leaving Trebizond we rode for a quarter of an

hour on a capital road which had been intended to extend as far as Erzeroum, but after a large sum of money had been expended on the project it was given up, and there the road lies—another instance of the Turkish government's impotency to execute any plan of utility, owing to the venality and cupidity of its agents. This road ends abruptly, and in a few minutes we were on the summit of a hill which commanded a magnificent view of Trebizond, and of the whole coast. The day was beautiful, and the sun shone magnificently on the white houses of the town below, and over the Euxine, then as calm as a mirror. We all strained our eyes to catch a glimpse of the allied fleets, which were hourly expected at Trebizond, but not a sail was to be seen, save a few native fishing boats, which were lazily floating about. From thence we proceeded over hill and dale, at every hundred paces crossing a small rivulet, whilst at every step a wild little stream swept over the road or bubbled away under the snow. After a few hours' ride we came into a beautiful valley, which reminded me vividly of one of the most picturesque spots of Germany—the lovely Neckar-Thal, which leads from Heidelberg to Heilbronn. Wooded mountains on either side rose gracefully from the valley, through which a violent stream ran its turbulent course, now rushing through rocks and forming little cataracts, then again

running madly to the right and left, leaving bare small islands, on which bloomed, despite the inclemency of the season, white wild-flowers and little shrubs. Every spot that permitted it was cultivated, and even patches of land that hung perpendicular from the rocks, and where it seemed impossible for a human being to stand, even these were tilled. The implements employed were of the rudest description, and the labour was performed by oxen or buffaloes.

The Pacha now pushed on ahead, a feat that we were unable to imitate, as our animals, already slow, were now nearly knocked up. At length we reached the village in which we were to pass the night, tired out and half famished. With great difficulty our party found accommodation, and after having spread our carpets to sleep on, we turned our attention towards dinner, or rather, supper. We sent out our servants to scour the place, and bring back fowls, butter, and milk. Judge of our consternation when they returned with all the eatables the place possessed, and which consisted of three eggs! The idea of six famishing travellers dining off three eggs was too rich a joke, and so superbly ridiculous that we could not do otherwise than laugh at our unfortunate fate. Not satisfied with the servants' first report we despatched them again, but with no better result. At last, by dint

of perseverance, we obtained a small quantity of rice, which we devoured, after having had to wait two hours for its preparation. When we had nearly finished there was a knock at the door, and in came two Polish officers, who asked permission to stop the night in our quarters as all the other houses were filled. This we readily acceded to, and we actually had the generosity to offer them some of the rice, which, under the circumstances, was a most pleasing trait. The pair did not require pressing, and fell on the food like hungry wolves.

Whilst on the subject of wolves, those gentlemen, with a select party of jackals, favoured us with their harmony until daybreak. After supper, or rather the apology for one, we laid down to sleep; but here a rather amusing incident occurred. One of the Poles, an old colonel, with long white moustaches, had been talking rather pragmatically about the duty of a rider being, first, to attend to his horse, and then to his own wants; but this admitted fact had not prevented him from first eating his own supper, and then starting to look after that of his steed. During his absence, one of the servants brought in the news that two horses were missing from the stables. It appears that the pachas are in the habit of pressing into their service all the horses they can lay their hands on; and if they indemnify the owner at all (which is a rare occurrence), it is with

a sum insufficient even to keep the animals during the journey. This is a great hardship to the poor fellows whose only capital is perhaps an old horse, which they load with merchandise for Persia, and on which depends their living. Now, one of these men, whose two horses had been pressed for this identical journey, entertained a great objection to the whole proceeding. By way of entering a protest against the act of his animals being employed without remuneration, he very slyly went to the stables, unsaddled his horses, and drove them home to Trebizond, at the risk of losing his life in passing by night, passages which are dangerous even by day. One of these horses had been mounted by the said colonel with the white moustache, who presently returned from the stables, where he had gone to inspect the feeding of his horse, with the saddle on his arm, and with the blankest face imaginable. We sympathetically hailed him with peals of laughter, whilst he exploded into a storm of Polish oaths perfectly astounding. I have had occasion to hear individuals give vent to their anger in almost every European language, and I had given the palm, both as regards volubility and force of expression, to the Italian tongue; but I was now convinced of my error, and henceforward I will back a Pole to swear against all comers. Having exhausted his wrath, the colonel began a long conversation with his companion, which

did not finish till past midnight, and effectually prevented us from sleeping ; so that we vowed in future to escape the infliction of visitors.

The next morning we held a council of war, and came to the determination of letting the Pacha go on with his suite, as it appeared not unlikely that, before arriving at Erzeroum, we should be starved to death, owing to the number of consumers and the smallness of the supply of provisions. Besides, we should be able to join his Excellency at Erzeroum, and explain our desertion. At eight in the morning, the Pacha having started at daybreak, we left Gevisleek, and again were favoured with fine weather. Our party now consisted of Colonel Thorne, an Italian (a captain in the Ottoman service), Major Bonfanti, and myself. In addition to ourselves there were three servants, who sturdily refused to co-operate for the public good. Moreover, we had four baggage horses and their owners, who walked manfully after them up to their thighs in snow. We now began to experience intense cold, against which however we were well protected ; and the scenery began to assume a very different character to that of the day before. Having crossed a deep ravine, we ascended a rugged mountain, without the trace of tillage, whilst on the opposite side every inch was cultivated. At the top of a rock some enterprising individual had built himself a hut, but how he

managed to ascend or descend were matters of mystery. Probably the land he tilled cost him nothing, and no Turkish tax-gatherer would venture up to collect taxes or dues from so dangerous a quarter. In a few hours we entered into real Alpine scenery, only more wild and grand. Mountain torrents fell from dizzy heights, forming glaciers, and losing themselves beneath the snow and ice which choked up the ravine. At times a wild torrent issued from some crevice, and rushed with fearful noise through rocks of Titanic size, which lay in wonderful confusion, and had been hurled to their strange positions by some convulsion of the earth. Above our heads and on every side were snow-capped mountains, rising one above the other, and of various formations. Some were round, others peaked, whilst the greater number presented the most rugged and abrupt shapes. We had to pass this and the succeeding day along precipices miles long, and of frightful depth; but we were fortunate in meeting with no accident, and in not losing a single baggage-horse. One of the latter fell, but was luckily caught by a shrub; and he rose, shook himself, and took his rank after the others with utter indifference of his fall.

Accidents are very common with the baggage-horses; and as they push by each other in the narrow passes, the one nearest the abyss falls, and is

generally dashed to pieces. We passed several carcasses on this day's journey which were still fresh, and on which dogs and crows were feeding. A wolf came running down the side of the mountain, but on seeing us he sneaked off before a revolver could be brought to bear on him.

No country can offer greater attractions to a sportsman than the Pachalick of Trebizond, in which we were still wandering. Partridge, snipe, and small game are to be found in abundance; whilst wild boars and bears offer a more exciting and dangerous sport. The former roam untouched in the forests, as the Turk despises swine-flesh, and are only to be killed in one manner, which requires some patience. The hunter must be concealed near the spot where they regularly come down to drink. The first shot must be mortal, otherwise adieu to your intended victim, for he is fleet of foot and out of range in a minute. Bears are likewise numerous, and when pressed by hunger will give chase to a caravan. Popular report says that on these occasions only can the horses be induced to break out of their walk, and gallop on. The animals are instantly aware of the presence of a bear; they exhibit the greatest fear, give vent to a plaintive neigh, and rush madly forward. The wolves here are cowardly in the extreme; the report of a pistol suffices to disperse them.

Late in the afternoon we arrived at a little village where we passed the night. I will describe the house, the best in the place, as it is a type of a village home in the province of Trebizond. The house was of one story, and contained two rooms, one for habitation, the other as a kind of store-room. The stables were underground, though in some instances the houses are built on a wooden gallery, when the ground-floor forms the stables. In the room intended for domestic use a portion is elevated, and covered with a coarse matting, on which the carpet is spread for repose. One or two little windows, framed with oiled white paper, throw the smallest light imaginable into the room, at the end of which huge logs burn merrily. The rude chimneys have the disadvantage, however, of filling the room with smoke, and necessitate the constant opening of the door.

On the 2nd of February we started at daybreak from this village, and entered a forest containing some of the finest beech-trees I have ever seen. After leaving the forest we came in sight of a high mountain covered with snow, over which lay our route. We gradually left behind us every vestige of vegetation, and nothing but snow met our eyes. Unfortunately the sun was shining, and the reflection of the snow gave great pain to the eyes and inflamed the face. We passed one poor fellow who was rolling in agony on the white surface. At first

I thought he was intoxicated, but lifting up his head his eyes appeared as two rolling orbs of fire—he was blind. Very often the blindness is temporary, but often the powers of vision are lost for ever. We approached the summit of the mountain, which had the shape of an egg, and in a few minutes we had crowned it. The change of scene was most striking. We had beheld for hours nothing but the white eternal snow, and here at our feet lay large forests and perpendicular rocks, presenting their black sides in vivid contrast with the snow. In the perspective a high range of mountains closed in the view. On the summit we encountered a large caravan of Persians, who had halted to repose, and were mustering their horses.

It was here, I may remark, that I saw the first and last female—that I had the pleasure of meeting between Trebizond and Erzeroum. This specimen of the fair sex was a withered old lady, armed with a long gun; and at our approach she covered her face with as much precaution as would have befitted a young Sultana. The Trebizond women do not drape themselves with the graceful yasmik of Constantinople, but cover their heads with a square cloth of the pattern of our English dusters, and under that covering some wear a black crape, which, as may be imagined, is most unpicturesque. The descent of the mountain was too steep to admit of riding, so we all, with one

exception, dismounted and picked our way down. Not one escaped without one or two tumbles in the deep snow, which was warming and not unpleasant. A Turk who persisted in riding down was thrown over his horse, and rolled over and over in the snow. At the bottom of the mountain we met a large party of horsemen and horses with litters, who had put up at a little khan. The litters conveyed nothing less than the harem of Abdi Pacha, late commander-in-chief of the army at Kars, who had distinguished himself above all his colleagues by his imbecility. We had intended to have dined at this khan, but found on enquiry that the ladies in question had eaten up everything the place contained. A man, moreover, arrived with a little black sheep, intended no doubt as a *bonne bouche*. We therefore proceeded, and a little further on encountered Abdi Pacha himself with his suite. This individual possessed an extremely repulsive exterior, and had not the common politeness to respond to Colonel Thorne's polite salutation. This little forgetfulness of manner excited some very strong expression in the Anglo-Saxon tongue on the part of the colonel, which had the effect of greatly enlivening the latter part of the day's journey. Following the cavalcade was a little English pointer, who seemed quite at home amidst the snow, and was trotting along wagging its tail.

We presently overtook a Turkish captain, who,

we subsequently discovered, had served in the French army, and was a most intelligent man. His horse was completely knocked up, and he had been forced to dismount and drag him along—no task of love, I can assure you. We that night took up our quarters in a little village shut in by two huge rocks, on one of which were perched the ruins of an ancient Genoese castle. All over the country these remains are to be seen, and speak volumes of the power once possessed by Genoa in Asia Minor. One ruin in particular attracted my attention, this was at Kaley. How the masons were enabled to convey their materials up the precipice on which the castle had been constructed, seemed most miraculous. The only egress and entrance to the fort was by a small gateway, leading by a subterranean passage through the rock, which was completely excavated. We found at this village a very comfortable khan and plenty of provisions. Late in the evening the Turkish captain arrived leading, or rather dragging, his exhausted horse. He was tired out, and was about to throw himself on his mat to sleep, when a message arrived from the Pacha, ordering him to take a fresh horse and join him at once. The poor fellow had to obey, and set off again by moonlight.

I will pass over my two following days' travels, which were uninteresting. We had passed the high mountains, and were travelling over vast plains, full

of orchards and little villages. In summer this spot must be beautiful, but in winter, with five feet of snow, it was merely tedious. The first day I had great difficulty in keeping my seat, so great was my weakness, but gradually my strength returned, and, with the exception of the fatigue and cold, I so far had enjoyed the journey extremely.

Of Sunday, the 5th of February, I shall ever entertain the most vivid recollection; for it was on that day that I, and part of our party, narrowly escaped a dreadful death. Colonel Thorne and Major Bonfanti had started earlier in the morning, and escaped the storm. I, and my Italian friend, had left the khan, where we had passed the night, and soon arrived on an immense mountain-plain, which seemed to have no termination; north, south, east, and west nothing but snow up to the horses' flanks. We had difficulty in tracing the tracks of former travellers, and at length were forced by the cold to turn off to a small village, where, in a kind of farm-house, we took refuge. Here we had the most delicious meal of the whole journey, but which cost us dearly. In eating bread, fresh butter, and new honey, washed down with warm milk, we lost much valuable time, for on leaving we found the wind blowing fiercely, and hurling the snow in whirlwinds. We had advanced for two hours, and of Baiburt, our place of destination, not a trace could

be seen. The plain seemed endless, nothing but deep snow as far as the eye could wander, with not a rock or a tree to guide our steps. My dragoman, who had made this journey some thirty times, rode in front, trusting to his memory to find the right direction : for all traces of the road, all hoof marks, were obliterated by the drifting snow. Of a sudden he stopped, the snow had weakened his sight, and he was utterly unable to act as guide. Moreover, he expressed his fears of having taken a wrong direction, and began to give up all hope. The night was fast drawing on, and our position was awful in the extreme. Nothing remained for us but to await the arrival of the muleteers, who were not far behind with the baggage. Presently they arrived, and, to our consternation, declared themselves perfectly ignorant of the way. They had blindly followed us. It was too late to return on our steps, for the same danger threatened us behind as in front. The muleteers were hopeless, and shouted out to Allah for assistance. We scoured the plain on horseback, in order to gain some clue to our escape, but in vain. The horses were worn out, and a few miles more would have killed them. The muleteers and my dragoman were nearly dead with terror. The latter, who was well mounted on a horse of his own, asked permission to ride on and seek the road. Although I fathomed his intention, I could not give a refusal, which probably he would

not have heeded. He, therefore, verged off where he imagined the road lay, and speedily disappeared in the drift. I was now nearly benumbed with cold, and sick at heart with our dreary prospects. The wind continued to blow violently, and the drift it occasioned prevented our seeing fifty paces before us. Poor De Cellis, my Italian companion, was quite prostrate, and the muleteers were venting their despair in shouts to Allah. Never shall I forget this moment; all around was nothing but snow, without a speck to relieve the desolation of the scene. The shades of evening were drawing in rapidly, and our position (rendered more unsupportable by the lamentations of the Turks) was indeed hopeless. One of the cattergis (muleteers) at length said to his companion, "This is a just punishment for travelling with Giaours." No sooner had he finished this phrase, than down came my heavy whip on his shoulders. The man shouted with pain, and this exertion on my part seemed to have brought back my drooping energies. A pleasant warmth flushed over my frame, and I recovered nerve enough to look our situation in the face. The only hopes we now had were in discovering the road, and having waited thirty minutes in vain for the return of the dragoman, any further delay would have been fatal. I endeavoured with signs to make the cattergis understand the necessity of seeking in the snow for

the hardened tracks of former caravans. With great difficulty could they be induced to struggle against their fate, but at last the whole party separated, and each taking a different direction, commenced removing the light snow that concealed the ordinary tract. Half an hour elapsed in this manner: at times a man gave a shout of joy, which was re-echoed by the whole party, who ran to the spot fondly imagining that salvation had arrived. But on minute examination the supposed tracks were found to be illusory. At length a distinct hoof-mark was discovered by one of the cattergis, who had advanced considerably a-head. We all ran as fast as our exhausted strength would permit to this spot, and, by digging away the snow, came upon an undoubted path. The feelings of gratitude to the Almighty, experienced by all, can be imagined. We returned hastily to the horses, who were nearly perished with fatigue and cold, and pushed on in the direction towards which the cattergis' experience told them the path would probably incline. At times we lost the track, and suddenly the foremost rider found himself sinking in deep snow. Thereupon the same fears and despondencies returned: for, after all, it is a sad and inglorious death to perish in the snow. The man and horse were, however, extricated by our joint efforts—the same process of seeking for the road

was recommenced, and with the same fortunate result.

At length after having been eleven hours on horse-back, five of which were passed in this terrible state of doubt, we caught sight of the tower of Baiburt, which released us from all further fears. We entered that town without encountering a soul; all the shops were closed in the bazaar from the intense cold, and not an inhabitant ventured out. We arrived at the khan completely exhausted; my eyes and face were burning and swollen, and my very bones ached from the cold. Colonel Thorne had become alarmed at our non-arrival, and his fears and indignation were equally roused by the appearance of George, the dragoman, alone. The latter he overwhelmed with reproaches at his base desertion of his master, although, after all, the man could scarcely be blamed nor expected to have sacrificed his hopes of escape from a terrible death for the mere inducement of his monthly wages. As I could not help myself, I adopted this view of the matter. The colonel had sent his firman to the Governor, in order to obtain men and horses to scour the country, and try and discover us. At this moment we entered, to the great delight of the good old colonel. A quarter of an hour later night would have fallen upon us, and then all hopes of salvation must have been relinquished. Not a week before, a courier with government despatches,

perished on the very spot where we had lost ourselves, and the remains of his horse still lay fresh and almost untouched by the wolves. This sight, it may be imagined, had by no means tended to raise our hopes of escape.



CHAPTER IV.

CONTINUATION OF THE JOURNEY FROM TREBIZOND TO ERZEROUH.

It was noon on the following day before I awoke from a long and refreshing sleep. Colonel Thorne and Major Bonfanti were preparing to depart with a large caravan, and used every persuasion to prevail upon me to accompany them. I felt, however, so fatigued with the exertions of the preceding day that I determined upon remaining a day at Baiburt. Captain De Cellis, who was equally exhausted, adopted the same resolution. Our party then separated again, and we did not meet any more until we arrived at Erzeroum.

The cold this day was so very severe that the shops in the bazaar remained closed, the proprietors being unable to resist the weather, and fearing to be overwhelmed by the snow, which was driven by the wind with great violence in every direction. The khan, a new and comfortable building, where I had proposed to put up, was occupied by 500 soldiers, who had

formed part of the corps that, previous to the arrival of General Guyon, had disbanded and left Kars from want of provisions. Our present quarters were at a Turkish coffee-house, which, in comparison with our previous night's lodgings, were princely. The only drawback to our enjoyment was the intolerable curiosity of the Turks, who watched every motion we made with the greatest eagerness. I excited great wonder by washing my face with soap, and when I brushed my teeth the most lively satisfaction was evinced by the whole assembly. When I wrote in our fashion, and unlike the Turks, who hold the paper in their left hand whilst writing, an unfavourable verdict was given against the European method, but when they caught sight of some sketches (very poor ones, indeed) that I had made on the road, the astonishment created was intense. They were passed round the room, and many were the "mashallah," or expressions of wonder they excited. The sketches were the making of me, and the remainder of the day I was looked upon as an individual of high learning. The Turkish population in this part of the empire are of the old school, and never have I met with men more honest, more hospitable and good-natured. Their simple habits distinguish them pre-eminently from the "Young Turk," and the most humble catergi, or muleteer, possesses an air of dignity which is absent at Constantinople. In these

districts the fez is unknown, and the turban and bag breeches reign paramount. I found the men as curious as women, and as easily pleased as children. The first inspection was invariably given to our arms. I thought my revolver would have created a tremendous furore; quite the contrary: the Turks examined it, thought it a very pretty plaything, and returned the pistol to me with an air of such undisguised contempt that would have sent the famous Colonel Colt, had he been present, into immediate fits; "How can such things kill?" exclaimed the bystanders; "they will wound and nothing more. These are the weapons for men," (they continued) and then were produced pistols as long as an arm, with a barrel like a fowling-piece, and large flint locks. "Look at this," and our attention was directed to the heavy silver mountings and ornaments which command here so much admiration. In fact, the Turk likes a large and showy weapon, be it a pistol or a sabre. I mentioned how easily these good-natured people were pleased. A cup of coffee with a lump of sugar put in it was received with smiling thanks, and a glass of rum or of liqueur, which I always gave out to be syrup, in order to smother the conscience of the "true believers," produced the most lively demonstrations of good will. I am sorry to say, however, that even here the commands of the Prophet are not always obeyed. When Colonel Thorne, who required an

extra horse, had contemplated calling on the governor of the town with a view of obtaining his assistance, he was informed that this step would be perfectly useless, as that worthy official was dead drunk, and had just been put to bed.

The town of Baiburt is commanded by the ruins of an ancient Genoese castle of vast extent, and at one time of great strength. The Russians in the last war took possession of the town, and commenced excavating the above ruins. Amongst other prizes they discovered some valuable antiquities, one of which was a cradle of massive gold. Castle and town were both embedded in deep snow, consequently I defer giving my description of Baiburt to another occasion.

I found myself greatly refreshed by the day's repose and another good night's rest. On the 7th we again proceeded towards Erzeroum, and unfortunately encountered a severe north wind, with snow, which greatly retarded our progress. On the 8th we left the plains, and again began to ascend. As we progressed, the tracks of large wheels met our eye and greatly puzzled us, as no carts are used or could be employed on the mountains. In time the mystery was solved, for ahead of us we perceived some thirty men who surrounded some object drawn by a train of oxen. On approaching we found it to be a field-piece which was being taken to Zazala, there to await favourable weather, and then to go on to

Kars. On the road we met four more cannon, and at Zazala we counted fourteen others, with some thirty ammunition waggons. As may be well understood, the progress of the cannon was slow and difficult. They were each drawn by a team of ten small oxen, and were accompanied by a number of men who assisted as circumstances required. I could not understand how the heavy load could proceed along the precipices and down the ravines that lay in the way without accident. True, to perform the distance of eleven leagues they had taken eight days. Every now and then some turn in the path, or snow of extra depth, would impede the progress of the oxen and a stoppage occurred. After the cattle had been well thrashed, and this measure had failed to obtain the required result, a council of war was held by the men. When every individual had given his private opinion as to what had caused the unpleasant stoppage, and relative to the means that must be adopted in order to remove it—after much valuable time had been lost in this controversy, in which no two could agree, then some glimmering of common-sense would cause the men to put their broad shoulders to the wheel, or drag along with the oxen, when off started the load triumphantly. The next ten minutes another stoppage would take place, and the above scene again be enacted.

The field-pieces were of the old Prussian model, and in excellent condition. We tried to push on beyond Zazala, a place containing a few khans, but were forced to return, as the road was completely lost in the snow. The night was magnificent; the moon threw her splendour upon the deep white plain, and reflected strangely on the cannon which lay unguarded outside the khan. However, later the wind arose and another terrible day dawned. I had felicitated myself on having escaped so narrowly from a horrible death on the plains of Baiburt, and little did I, or those who were with me, dream of what we were about to undergo. From the khan where we passed the night we had to proceed over a high mountain which rises and falls in an almost perpendicular manner, and is followed by a second mountain less high. At the foot of the latter lies the plain of Erzeroum. At nine in the morning we left the khan, having waited two hours in the vain hope that some caravan would pass on and open the road. For an hour we proceeded safely enough, but then all at once the wind redoubled in fury, and shortly the snow, which had accumulated in the night on the road, came up to the horses' knees, and then, becoming deeper as we proceeded, it reached to their flanks. It was impossible for the poor beasts to lift their legs; they made a few desperate leaps, and then fell on their sides. Here, of

course, we were dismounted, nolens volens, and after extricating ourselves easily, we proceeded to release the animals from their position and drag them on. Progressing a few minutes, the snow would grow less deep, and we remounted only to encounter the deep snow again. The horses would again plunge, and again did the difficulty attending their extrication arise. Before we had proceeded half an hour the animals were exhausted, and we ourselves quite weary. The heavy Circassian coats we wore as a protection from the cold bore us down when dismounted and forced to work hard, in order to release the horses from their position. Here the chief sufferer was my companion, the Italian captain of dragoons, De Cellis, whose physical qualities worked hard against him. This gentleman found his immense height (he was six feet six high) a severe nuisance, for his long legs totally prevented him from keeping on his small horse, whilst they seemed to lose themselves in fabulous depths beneath the snow. These legs were encased in two immense cavalry boots which reached to his thigh, and were perfectly unfit to walk in even on good roads. These boots, by-the-by, were ever a fruitful source of mirth and admiration to the Turks, who, like myself, had never seen anything so imposing or so uncomfortable. They said the boots needed only to be mounted on wheels to form two capital field-pieces,

and this suggestion possessed some merit. The owner of these boots, seeing his horse of no use and thinking the summit of the mountain near, let the animal turn back and find his way to the baggage behind, whilst he himself walked manfully on. Shortly after this the baggage-men refused to proceed, and turned back to the khan. They only rejoined us with our baggage at Erzeroum. Two men, who were bound over the mountain, passed by and made signs for us to proceed rapidly and to beware of the wind. As they seemed to know the road, I engaged them, through my dragoman, to accompany us. "Extremely obliged," they answered; "in a day like this, let every man look after his own skin."

I succeeded, however, by offering a handsome reward, in persuading them to keep with our party. One of these peasants went on in front, sounding the way with his staff, for all traces of former tracks had been swept away by the wind. To give you an idea of the power of the wind on these mountains, I will mention that on the preceding day three caravans, numbering together 800 horses laden with ammunition, with whom was Colonel Thorne's party, had passed over, and yet all the hoof traces and the road they had cut through the snow had vanished. The surface of the snow was, to use a homely simile, as white and as smooth as a twelfth-cake. The

second peasant kept by my side, and for some time we went on well enough. Of a sudden I heard a sound like a cry of distress pierce through the wind, and looking round I perceived that my long friend was missing. Cry came after cry, so I sent back the man who had kept with me to his assistance, whilst I despatched my dragoman with the other guide to the nearest village, some three hours' distance, in order to send out fresh horses for ourselves, and men to hunt us up in case we should go astray. It appeared that the dragoon in his immense boots had lost sight of us, for from the drift it was impossible to see thirty paces ahead. Not knowing in the least where he was walking, of a sudden he found himself up to his neck in snow, and consequently commenced roaring for assistance. The man, after a time, extricated him, and they marched onwards. In the meanwhile I had stopped my horse, in order for the two to join me; but the wind blew so bitterly, whilst ice and snow were driven by its violence in my face, that I was compelled, with the hood drawn over my head, to advance.

I have already alluded to the wretched animal on whose back I was doomed to travel, and that day I found it more obstinate and less sagacious than usual. The tracks left by the dragoman and guide had already disappeared, so that I wandered on,

each step being a struggle, without the slightest notion of where I was going, trusting entirely to the sagacity of the horse and to my own good star. Both these safeguards proved helpless, for after advancing a few hundred paces my horse hesitated ; then moved forward again, and finding himself sinking in deep snow, made a desperate plunge, fell, and rolled down some twenty feet from where the road was supposed to be. When the horse first sprang forward, I felt the snow give way ; but had not sufficient time to throw myself from his back, so that after the excitement of the roll, I found myself up to my neck in snow, with the broken reins in my hand, at least a couple of yards in front of my beautiful and trustworthy steed. The head and fore part of the animal were under the snow, and only his hind quarters were visible. By a mortal effort he succeeded in extricating his head, and gazed wildly about him. I was afraid he would attempt to struggle forward, in which case he would have smothered me ; but like myself he was exhausted by the fall, and stopped to gather strength. As soon as I had recovered breath (I had been nearly stifled by my hood and comforter, together with the snow), I disengaged my hands and arms and tried to move up, having first thrown off my heavy coats and other impediments. The most feasible manner of saving myself seemed to be, first to climb over

the horse's head, and then to struggle up along the snow broken by the fall, by which time my friend and the guide would have had time to come up and render me assistance. In theory this plan was excellent, but the horse sternly refused to accommodate himself to my views, for when I approached his head he commenced plunging. Fortunately, in his desperate efforts to regain his legs he fell in his first position, the head beneath the surface. By a violent effort I gained the horse's back, passed along it, and over again into the deep snow. To climb up twenty feet took me half an hour, for every pressure with my foot sent the other still deeper into the snow. At length wearied with the exertion, and covered with perspiration, I gained the place from whence I fell, and thanked God that I was safe. The horse had continued his struggles, and now lay with his fore-feet projecting from the snow. I gave him up, and although I pitied the poor owner, who would feel the loss keenly, yet I felt a savage satisfaction in being rid of a beast that had caused me so much annoyance and danger. At this moment my long friend and the guide came running up as fast as their fatigued limbs could carry them. They had seen the horse struggling below, and not perceiving me, imagined I lay smothered beneath. I soon convinced them to the contrary by crying out lustily for the rum bottle,

which of course now that it was wanted had been left with the baggage. I asked the man if the horse could be saved, to which he replied in the negative, and he strenuously refused to go down in the track I had made to fetch up my coats. Who, however, can resist the fatal sight of a handful of piastres? Not my man, who instantly prepared to descend. "What curious people!" he muttered, "they are losing valuable time and risking their lives for an old coat." It was not my old coat alone I wished to save, but also my saddle and bridle which were on the sinking animal. To go down to the horse was easy enough, so my long friend must needs also lend his assistance. But when the coat and saddle were saved and the task of ascending commenced, then they experienced sad trouble. Both being much heavier than myself they found my track quite useless, and to this fact did the white horse owe his preservation. It struck the ideas of the pair, that if the animal could be induced to open the way it would be more satisfactory to all parties, but as it was utterly impossible for the horse to turn round and ascend they determined to drive him forward and conduct him up a different way. If the snow became deeper and the animal should be smothered, its fate would be the same and the death more easy. To move the horse was a difficult task; his limbs were stiffening with

the cold, and death stared him in the face. The man possessed a tremendous staff which came down like thunder on the animal's back, whilst the dragoon pricked it with his sabre. Maddened with pain the beast made a despairing effort, plunged forward, and with a few leaps gained the bottom of the ravine, where fortunately the snow was not so deep as we had imagined. The stick and sabre were again brought into requisition, this time as an aid, not as a punishment. With the assistance of these two auxiliaries the guide and the dragoon made a kind of road up to the highway, along which the animal was coaxed, beaten, and dragged. As soon as the pair had taken breath, we set out with as quick a step as the wind and snow would permit, and at length came in sight of the summit of the mountain over which we had to pass. Here we endured great sufferings from the dreadful wind and cold; at times a false step would send us up to the waist in snow, from which we were almost too weary to extricate ourselves. We passed here a horse that, laden with ammunition, had fallen on its back, and now lay with legs stretched upwards from under the snow. The magpies, who swarm here in thousands, were hovering around the carcase with eager appetites. On the top of the mountain the drift prevented our distinguishing the road. We passed here a poor fellow who was on the verge of despair. A horse

and a donkey, his sole means of support, had both missed their footing and had stepped over the precipice. With the philosophic resignation peculiar to his race, the poor ass lay quietly buried in the snow awaiting patiently his fate; the horse, on the contrary, was struggling violently, and at every exertion sinking deeper and deeper. Later in the evening I met the man in the village; he told me that both the animals had perished. Once on the other side of the mountain (it is called the "bitter mountain" by the Turks), the wind was less violent, but the snow even deeper. Here the night before four horses had perished, and their carcasses were still fresh and untouched by the wolves, who now had a splendid time of it. From the mountain top we enjoyed a magnificent view. On all sides were mountains covered with snow, and deep valleys along which toiled caravans of ammunition. The sun gilded the snowy tops and cast curious shadows on the little valley at our feet, whilst breathless silence reigned over the vast panorama. At about a mile from the village where we were to sleep, we were met by the horses and men who had been sent to our assistance by my dragoman, and which like many good things arrived when they were no longer wanted. We arrived at the village completely exhausted. We had despaired, and so had the guides, of ever crossing the mountain; and here we saw ourselves in a

comfortable khan, with a fire burning fiercely its welcome, and already prepared was a huge kettle of pillau, and such magnificent pillau! I must tell the ingredients. Two plump fowls cut in pieces, and thrown into a large iron saucepan or kettle filled with milk and a little water; when the fowls become tender the pan is filled with rice, and an onion or two thrown in to give an additional flavour. What with the milk and the flavour of the fowls, the dish was delicious. I am ashamed to say how much I disposed of, but I was ravenous, and being nobly assisted by the others, in a short half-hour not a grain of rice was to be seen nor an unpicked bone to be found. Then for sleep. The carpets were spread and covered with our cloaks; we had no sooner lain down than our eyelids closed heavily, and off we dropped to the land of dreams.

I have not described all the hardships and sufferings we that day endured, for after all it is a great "bore" to read a man's grievances. I wish to prove, however, that I have not exaggerated in the least the dangers of the way, as might perhaps be imagined, in order to throw a little romance over a few days' dull travelling. I was not more unfortunate than many others, as I will show, nor were my sufferings more acute than theirs. The whole party that had left Trebizond together had scattered in the course of the journey, and we all encountered,

and in the worst part of the way, four days of so tempestuous a nature that the peasants and catergis declared that for years nothing similar had been witnessed. Haïreddin Pacha, in crossing this mountain two days before we passed it, had engaged fifty men to proceed in advance in order to open the road. Notwithstanding these auxiliaries he lost his way, and experienced great danger. Several of his baggage-horses perished, and what is more dreadful, two of his suite died from cold on the summit of the mountain. Of two Polish colonels, one like myself fell with his horse down a ravine, and he remained there nearly two hours before assistance came to hand. His horse, less fortunate than mine, was left below. The other colonel lost himself in the drift, and was found exhausted several hours afterwards by men who were sent to hunt him up by Haïreddin Pacha. Not a single individual that could not tell of some hair-breadth escapes which he had experienced! But the greatest loss had been sustained by the unfortunate caravans, which had suffered dreadfully. On the day I crossed this mountain a large Persian caravan was approaching by the plain of Erzeroum a few miles distant, when they were overtaken by darkness and lost their way. Nothing remained for the poor fellows but to unload their horses, who were placed inside a kind of barricade formed by their loads, and there

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to pass the bitter cold night without food or fire. Their sufferings were heart-breaking, and when day dawned many of the poor fellows were fast sinking, whilst twenty horses had perished.

We stopped a day at this little village, for no one could be found who would venture across the second mountain as a guide. We should have been forced, perhaps, to pass several days here had not the governor of Baiburt arrived on his way to Erzeroum. I have already alluded to this gentleman, who was a good-natured individual, though given to the bottle. Far be it from me to find fault with the latter defect, for he was kind enough to send me a supply of raki, of which I had none, and splendid stuff it was, and proved him to be a capital judge of the article. In return, I sent him some coffee and plenty of sugar, with which he was unprovided. Finally, we agreed to join company and attempt the passage. A caravan came in late at night, and spread sad news of the state of the mountain. A small avalanche had fallen on them, and two horses lay smothered below. I wanted to push forward at all hazards, and nothing could deter the governor, who said, "What my sufferings and those of my suite were on the preceding day, you who must have encountered the same can tell; but having escaped them, I shall consider my life henceforward as insured, so let us advance." We consequently

left on the following morning at daybreak. The governor had six persons in his suite, who opened a capital road for us. Fortunately the air was calm with no wind. We passed by the avalanche which had swept over the caravan the preceding evening, and which gave us great trouble. In passing too near the edge a man and his horse fell over; both were, however, rescued. It was a severe pull for the horses towards the top of the mountain, but once on the summit we took a slight repose. The raki bottle was passed round, and done full justice to, and then we turned our eyes to the view before us. The mountain descended steeply, and at its foot commenced the immense plain of Erzeroum. As far as the eye could wander the plain extended, encircled on all sides by distant mountains. At the further extremity could be distinguished a long dark shadow rising from the vast surface of snow. My heart beat gladly when I recognised in this shadow the place of my destination—the city of Erzeroum. At the foot of the mountain a small village stood invitingly, and there we all passed the night. The next morning early to horse and onwards. Have I mentioned that after the accident which happened to my ill-conditioned dromedary-looking white horse, I refused to mount his stubborn back, and took a fresh animal at the last village. My ex-steed was thenceforward driven on

in front, so that if a precipice or a fall of snow lay in our way he would first fall a victim, and give timely warning to the rest. We marched gaily on through a four-foot depth of snow, and passed village after village. Who can describe the feelings of tedium inspired by a journey towards a distant city across a seemingly interminable plain? Five hours we toiled on, without appearing to be a yard nearer to our point, and my patience rapidly evaporated.

At length the town, which appeared one vast block, gradually extended; the larger houses stood out boldly from their companions. A few trees became visible. We spur on our jaded horses, pass by a large cemetery, the black stones standing out like spectres from the snow-covered ground—pass a few miserable houses, and are welcomed by our old friends the dogs, who dart at our horses' feet, and bark loud defiance at the weary stranger. After eleven hours' ride we enter the town of Erzeroum, the once magnificent capital of Armenia. Slowly did we wind our way through the narrow streets, encumbered with snow, passing by khans, now filled with soldiers, who also crowd the street, and laugh, as well they may, at our sorry horses. The houses are low and flat-roofed; snow lies thick on them; men are on the roof shovelling off the weight which threatens to burst them in. I see a large

white mass falling through the air—plash! I receive a sudden blow, and find myself and horse all white from the effects of a large shovelfull of snow which had been hurled from one of the roofs and had fallen plump on my shoulder. This magnificent snowball gave the most lively satisfaction to everybody present, and half the town were at our heels to look at the strangers. I really could not enter into the spirit of the joke, but that only increased the delight of the little boys and the big soldiers, who gave vent to their feelings by loud and repeated laughter. Even old greybeards, who I verily believed had never laughed before, now smiled. So exhilarating it is and such capital fun to see a fellow-creature in distress. How far this mirth would have been carried at my expense, I really cannot say; but that quick-eyed monster the mob discovered a fresh source of enjoyment. Slowly riding behind me came my friend the dragoon officer, his extraordinary long legs and colossal boots dangling en negligé close to the ground. The attention of the mob was instantly diverted from me to this fresh victim, and its mirth increased tenfold. At length I reached the apartments which Mr. Brant, our consul, had had the great kindness to have prepared in readiness for my arrival. I now found myself, after a severe journey of thirteen days, in a civilised room,

actually provided with a stove and a real bedstead. Soon I found myself once again between clean sheets, but—shall I own it?—I missed the glorious pillau; and my slumbers were quieter and more refreshing when, covered with a cloak and with a saddle-bag for a pillow, I dozed off in a village khan. True, nothing in the world would induce me again to undertake a similar journey in the bitter winter season; and I represent the feelings of the many who left Trebizond at the same time as myself. Yet I do not regret having made it, for there were some moments of real enjoyment and capital fun, even amidst the chilly snow. But now I can well comprehend what I once doubted; how, in the retreat from Moscow, 20,000 horses perished in one night; and how brave men, who had faced death a hundred times, lost their senses; and others, in despair at the cruel cold, perished by their own hands.

I hastened to call upon Colonel Thorne, who was in bed and laid up by exhaustion. I shall never forget the shock I sustained in seeing the change his frame had undergone. To the effects of this journey I trace the result which five months later deprived me of a kind and excellent friend.

For my own part I was scarcely recognisable; my eyes were bloodshot, my face and lips swollen to twice their natural size, whilst the skin was peeling

off my face in a very painful manner. But either owing to the shock experienced by my system in the journey, or to some cause unknown to me, my health had vastly improved, and during my subsequent stay in Asia, amidst typhus fever and universal hardships, I never once experienced a day's illness.

CHAPTER V.

ERZEROUH.

THE house which I occupied at Erzeroum was situated in the Belgravia, in the Chassé d'Antin of that uninteresting and dirty town. The dwelling in question was in the centre of the European and Consular quarter, consequently in the most fashionable and diplomatic district. To the right stood the British Consulate, to the left the French, whilst the national flags of Austria and Persia fluttered over their respective establishments a little to the extreme right of my domicile.

My house formed one of a small row and had the advantage of overlooking a large Armenian cemetery. Between the row and the cemetery there existed in summer a road, through which flowed a little stream. The latter had been frozen up, and the road itself was one rough rampart of snow. A passage had been cut through the embankment of snow and ice over which the inhabitants had to climb into their respective houses. The passage was impassable from the

frightful effluvia which, in fact, pervaded all the streets. Before my windows on my arrival were lying two carcases of horses, over which the dogs of the quarter were wrangling and fighting. In a day or two nothing but the well-picked ribs were perceivable, but horses and cows constantly died in the stables and were, as a matter of course, dragged out into the public streets. The street dogs of Erzeroum are of a large size and of a mastiff breed. In order to resist the severe climate, nature in her beneficence has provided them with long shaggy coats, whilst in her rigour she has endowed them with insatiable appetites.

The entrance to my dwelling was by a low dark passage, which conducted to the kitchen. Another low doorway, against which all my visitors were in the habit of knocking their heads, led into two spacious apartments. The greater number of the Armenian houses in Erzeroum are constructed in this manner. The miserable entrance, and the squalid kitchens, were intended to deceive the tyrannical Osmanli of former days with respect to the wealth and comfort of the persecuted inhabitants. The private rooms of the family were, on the contrary, large and well built. The chamber, which I turned into a sitting-room, was of an immense size, in fact too large to be comfortable. It was lighted by two large windows framed with oiled paper, with a

central pane of *real* glass. Facing the windows, on the opposite side of the room, was constructed a gallery, similar to an orchestra balcony. At first I was greatly puzzled at this construction, but on examination I discovered that along the gallery were benches on which were placed to be aired the bedding of the establishment. A wonderful chimney occupied one side of the chamber and was highly ornamented with arabesques and Armenian inscriptions. Along the sides of the room, which was whitewashed, were little cupboards and paintings; the former were intended more for show than use, and were ornamented with brass nails in the coffin fashion. The paintings had been executed on the wall by a native artist, and were most remarkable. The chef d'œuvre of the collection consisted in the adventures of a British admiral, who was attired in a red uniform and was decorated with a cocked hat and feathers. The latter were painted red, green, and black. The first scene represented the admiral in a storm. The blue waves were lashing with fury a yellow steam-boat, with a pink paddle-box without wheels, but with a very large funnel from which issued clouds of very black smoke. The admiral was depicted at the wheel of the steamer guiding it through its perilous progress. If the gallant Briton was represented as towering over the high funnel, it was no doubt in order to permit the artist to render justice to the

intense anxiety displayed on the admiral's features. The next group represented a tremendous conflict between the admiral (who had evidently escaped the dangers of the deep) and a most ferocious dragon with a forked tongue and tail, sharp threatening claws, and mild blue eyes. The admiral was mounted on a bounding Arab, and armed with a Kurdish lance, a Turkish sabre, a Circassian cama, and an English fowling-piece; with the latter he was aiming sternly at the dragon, who was dancing on his hind legs and vomiting red fire. The last painting demonstrated the triumph of valour and its reward. In a cosy bower, composed of green and yellow flowers, was seated the admiral with a narghilé in his mouth, and a Persian lady by his side. The artist had scarcely done justice to the Persian lady, and in endeavouring to correct an obliquity in her vision had considerably damaged her complexion, which, perhaps, in the eye of a hard-hearted critic might have detracted from the general merits of the picture. Over the room in unexpected places were scattered paintings of black cats with wicked red eyes and bushy tails, and these would alone have sufficed to banish sleep from the eyes of a nervous man. The furniture of my chamber consisted in muslin window curtains, one small table, and two chairs, along with a little divan. This was scarcely sufficient to set off to advantage a room of

25 feet by 12 ; but, on the other hand, I had ample space for daily exercise.

It was a week before I left my room after the fatiguing journey from Trebizond ; but one day I ventured out of the house, and having climbed over the rampart of snow, and disturbed the dogs at their savoury meal, I walked cautiously, in order to avoid the holes in the road, over the small distance which separated my abode from the British Consulate. Mr. Brant occupied an excellent house, which he had constructed in European style, and which was fitted up and finished with an elegance that I had not anticipated meeting in Armenia. Leaving the British Consulate I safely arrived at the establishment of Mons. Castagné, who was acting for the time as French Consul. From that gentleman, as well as from Mr. Brant and his amiable family, I experienced a warm welcome. I next turned my steps to the American missionary house, occupied by the Rev. Mr. Peabody, to whom I had a letter from the mission at Trebizond. From Mr. Peabody I gleaned many interesting facts concerning the Armenian population, amongst whom lay principally his Christian labours. The Evangelical mission on which he and his brethren were engaged, had scarcely met with the desired success ; but by the establishment of schools, in which the Armenian children were gratuitously instructed, it

was hoped that the rising generation would repudiate in good time the superstitious errors of the church in which they had been born. Besides the establishments at Constantinople, Trebizond, and Erzeroum, the American Missionary Society has others in the interior of Asia Minor and in Persia. These amiable missionaries, by their good example and practical charity, have gained the respect of the population amongst whom they dwell.

From the Turks the missionaries have never encountered the slightest opposition; but at times the Armenian clergy have displayed hostile sentiments. Some years ago an Armenian mob, encouraged by the clergy, destroyed the mission-house and insulted the members of the mission. The Hon. Mr. Brown, the energetic Envoy of the United States at Constantinople, at once proceeded to Erzeroum, and compelled the Armenian bishop to replace the destroyed mission-house and its furniture, and at the same time to apologise himself for the misconduct of his co-religionists.

From the house of Mr. Peabody I wandered through the bazaar, and with much difficulty discovered the khan, where resided an Armenian merchant, to whom I had letters of introduction. The day being fine the streets were crowded, notwithstanding the accumulation of snow, with representatives of almost all the tribes of Asia. The

Kurd, with truculent countenance and the everlasting goat skin thrown arrogantly over his shoulders, was conversing on the prospects of the war and on the probabilities of pillage, with the slightly clad Arab, who was shivering in the cruel cold. The Persian merchants, with their lambskin caps and dyed beards, were chatting over the profits which the approaching famine promised to yield them. Robbers from Lazistan were watching the Persian traders and forming among themselves amiable projects to attack and pillage the same on their journey to Trebizond. Sickly-looking soldiers, who had left the hospital to enjoy a little fresh air, were being supported by their comrades, and were enjoying the scene of active life which surrounded them.

At the khan of Mr. Ovannes Marinoglu, the Armenian merchant, I remained some time. That gentleman was kind enough to show me all the new patterns, which were rather old, that he had received from Europe, and which were creating a furore in the harems of Erzeroum. Several purchasers entered the room whilst I was there, and commenced transacting business. The stuffs were invariably found too warm or too cold, and the half of the price demanded was offered. This was instantaneously rejected, and the freshness of the pattern and the expense of bringing it all the way

from Manchester or Lyons was dilated upon. Finally the bargain was struck and sealed over a pipe and a cup of coffee. The purchaser would then produce his purse and count out the sum in every known coin of the world. At the time I arrived at Erzeroum paper money had not yet been introduced, and heavy beschiks, many of them manufactured at Birmingham, formed the principal circulating medium. Besides this weighty coin old Greek pieces and money of every European and Oriental nation were accepted. In exchange for a bill on London, I once received from Mr. Marinoglu, besides several bags of small Turkish currency, many gold coins of the Greek empire, a few Venetian ducats, and a miscellaneous collection of Persian and Georgian money. All these coins had their respective market value, and were current in the bazaars of Erzeroum and Kars.

Before entering my own home, I paid Colonel Thorne a short visit. The colonel inhabited a house similar to my own, only the paintings on his walls were less brilliant than mine, and his furniture was less extensive. He possessed but one chair, whilst I was the happy owner of two. After having canvassed the respective merits and demerits of every town in the world to which fate had conducted us, we both united in declaring Erzeroum to be the filthiest and most uninteresting place on earth. We both

subsequently modified our opinion on arriving at Kars.

With the exception of this one day, I rarely left my own rooms. The cold continued to increase in intensity, and continual whirlwinds swept through the streets and over the vast plain of Erzeroum. The pane of glass in the window of my sitting-room commanded the latter, and afforded me much entertainment. The plain would daily assume a different feature. At one time the heavens were overcast, and the dark shadows of the surrounding villages arose abruptly from the white field of snow and ice. Then, again, the mid-day sun shone upon this plain, which, according to Armenian legends, was the site of the garden of Eden, and transformed the whole into an extensive mirage. The far-reaching plain appeared as a placid lake encompassed by snowy mountains until the straggling approach of numerous caravans recalled the senses to commonplace reality. At times I ventured out to dinner at the different European houses, or indulged in a game of whist at the French Consulate. On the whole the weather was more favourable to indoor recreation and to reading. Mr. Peabody the American missionary, possessed an excellent library, which I speedily ransacked.

The population of Erzeroum steadily decreases. At one time it amounted to above 140,000 souls ;

but in the present day it scarcely attains 30,000. An extensive commerce once enriched the place, but now it derives but a trifling advantage from a mere transit. Merchandise of great value passes through Erzeroum on its way from Persia to Constantinople; but the merchants refuse to open their precious bales, or to dispose of their contents elsewhere than in Stamboul. No public buildings of importance exist in Erzeroum, and scarcely a ruin remains to remind the present generation of its past grandeur. The old Genoese castle and fortifications are extensive ruins; but are inferior, both in size and beauty, to those of Kars and Baiburt.

A ruined mosque erected by a pious Persian in former days comprises two picturesque minarets, and this is the only edifice that can lay claim to the slightest admiration. At the time of my short residence in Erzeroum, this ruin had been transformed into a powder magazine, which, in my absence of confidence in the caution of the sentinels, I carefully avoided. The climate of Erzeroum is unfortunate. In winter the streets are impassable from snow and ice, in spring from the deluge of melting snow, and in summer from the troublesome dust. The neighbourhood of the town affords, it is said, some excellent sport, and game of every description abounds. Wild sheep

are numerous, and offer the greatest attraction to the sportsman; but I have never met with any body who has been so fortunate as to kill one. Mr. Calvert, an admirable botanist and an enthusiastic sportsman, has, during his long residence in Armenia, often seen these said sheep, but has hitherto, I believe, been unable to bring one down with his rifle.

The view of the cemetery from my windows afforded me often a sad spectacle. Corpses were daily brought to their last resting-place by the soldiers of the garrison. They were carried in an open deal coffin upon the shoulders of their comrades, and on arrival at the cemetery were thrown from that case into a narrow grave. A little ceremony was observed on one occasion, at the interment of Ali Pacha. This officer had distinguished himself in the last campaign by his impetuous bravery. He expired on the 8th of February, and was buried on the morrow. The soldiers and the whole population were deeply affected at the loss of Ali Pacha, who was their favourite. The wounds he had received in the last campaign were not mortal, but had been neglected, and the weakness created thereby developed a dormant affection of the lungs, which carried him off. He had been struck by a Minié rifle ball, that penetrated along his chest into his left arm. Ali

Pacha had risen from the ranks, and had been promoted a few days before his death to the grade of General of Division, with a separate command. He was rejoicing at being able to meet once more the detested Russians, when the symptoms of his malady increased, and his brave spirit fled. This was the first Pacha that had fallen in Asia in the cause of the Sultan.

A considerable crowd had assembled to witness the funeral ceremony. The corpse was carried by six soldiers, and was accompanied by a large number of the garrison. I did not remark the presence of a single Pacha or high official. An Imaun pronounced a few words, which evidently touched his audience; the corpse, enveloped in a sheet, was lowered into the grave, and thus the ceremony concluded. No monument was erected to commemorate the military virtues of the deceased, and his name perished from among his nation. On the morrow the horses, the arms, the pipes, and personal property of the departed Pacha were sold by public auction, whilst his wives and slaves found themselves strangers on the face of the earth.

The view from my solitary window at times afforded me a less dispiriting incident than the above. The gloomy monotony of the day was constantly broken by the discordant howlings of the dogs outside; and, at length, after I had

conquered the idea of their horrible banquets, I discovered myself taking an actual interest in their proceedings. The sagacity displayed by those poor animals at times astonished me. Many travellers have denounced these Turkish dogs, forgetful that to them alone are they indebted for preservation from plague and fever, whilst their ferocity has been the theme of many an eloquent but exaggerated diatribe. For my own part, I seldom witnessed any symptoms of ill-nature on the part of these unhappy creatures. The dogs of my neighbourhood after a time had become acquainted with my person, and made way for me with wagging tails. Often I addressed to them kind words or caressed them, and their demonstrations of joy and gratitude at the first good treatment they had ever received were intense. The colony which occupied the road, flanked by the dreary cemetery and the row in which my habitation was situated, consisted of about thirty dogs. They were under the control of a very old red-eyed leader, who conducted them, when necessary, to battle. The authority of this chief was absolute, and he was treated with extreme indulgence by his clan. The little puppies at times ventured to play with his venerable weather-beaten tail, and now and then the old fellow would condescend to engage in a romp with the rising generation. The tit-bits were the special portion of the chief, but he

also had to support the brunt of rival attacks. At each end of the street two or three dogs posted themselves as sentinels, and never moved beyond the limits of their kingdom. At times the neighbouring colonies would be pressed by pangs of hunger, and, led on by their chief, advanced upon the position occupied by the dogs of our quarter. The sentinels at once sounded the alarm, and resisted the attacks of the foe until succour arrived. Aroused from their banquets or from sleep by the voice of danger, the whole army rushed to the threatened point, and a tremendous conflict ensued. In good time the inhabitants appeared from their houses, and by dint of heavy clubs or stones checked the disturbance. Our dogs then returned in triumph to their customary haunts, and recommenced feasting or sleeping.

One day I was surprised to see a large cavalcade of Persians quit the town. In an hour they returned, preceded by Sheffi Khan, the late Persian minister at the Court of St. James. Whilst outside the town they indulged in a variety of national feats of horsemanship, which were very interesting. They checked their horses in full career, hurled their javelin and re-caught the same with facility, and very often, owing to the depth of the snow, both horse and rider turned an unexpected summersault.

Once inside the town, the Persians on their prancing horses, whose manes and tails were dyed with henna, resumed their usual thoughtful and diplomatic appearance.

CHAPTER VI.

PASSING EVENTS—THE ARMY.

ONE morning, after a confinement of several days to my house, the frost diminished and a partial thaw set in. Having encased myself in a pair of Constantinople mud boots, I ventured out and paid a visit to the different consulates. As I passed through the filthy streets of the town and wandered along the gloomy bazaar where nobody by any chance was ever seen to purchase anything, I was greatly struck by the sudden change for the better that was apparent in the external appearance of the military, who, as usual, thronged every thoroughfare. Yesterday they were dull, dirty, and slovenly-looking; to-day they were, on the contrary, cheerful and soldier-like. Their hands and faces the day before hidden in a crusty soil were now perfectly clean, and their cheeks ruddy and bright. Before I had recovered from my surprise at this metamorphosis I was nearly overwhelmed by actually hearing the men jingling money in their hands. Now, human credulity will

go a great way, especially in the east, but to see money, real piastres, in the poor Turkish soldier's possession, in the present evil days, appeared nothing short of a miracle. Had Mahomet taken pity on the faithful, or had the conscience of some oily pacha in a fit of indigestion disgorged its golden weight?

"Baccalum!" as the Turks say, "We shall see," and I already suspected the poor fellows of having committed the most awful crimes—of being guilty of theft—of murder—of having cut off old men's heads and old women's noses—of burning down houses and roasting little children—in fact, in having committed all the horrors which those amiable authorities, the German newspapers, declare to be their habitual pastime and recreation. These poor soldiers, who were as good-natured as that pinnacle of patience the London policeman, had neither mutilated old women nor pillaged a village; they had been no less surprised than the rest of the town when it was decreed that they should receive a month's pay. When a man's pay is eighteen months in arrear he can safely give up all present and future hopes of its ever being "posted;" and the joy now experienced by the soldiers at receiving this one month on account was extreme. The government, it might have been considered, had performed a most liberal and equitable arrangement to judge by

the smiling countenances of the men. Where the money had come from I know not. Be assured many a poor villager had wept over his forced contribution. Each soldier received his twenty piastres (about 3*s.* 4*d.* of our money), and if the sum in itself was not very grand the ceremony with which it was distributed supplied that deficiency. Haïreddin Pacha himself dealt out the pay into each soldier's itching palm, but I am not aware if that rendered the money more tenacious to the pockets of the military, for off they started to the baths, which accounted for their cleanly appearance, and they were now gravely occupied in smoking away their little capital in long chibouks, or "bubbling" it away like railway speculators in the more elegant water pipe.

Haïreddin Pacha started from here on Monday, the 20th instant, for Kars. He was accompanied by the two Polish Pachas, and many Polish and other foreign officers. Major Bonfanti, who accompanied him, had undertaken to find accommodation for Colonel Thorne and myself at Kars, and we consequently remained a short time longer in Erzeroum.

Like a good general, Haïreddin Pacha had proposed taking to Kars a large supply of provisions, and also money to pay the troops stationed there. With this intention he applied to all the Turkish and

Armenian bankers and merchants, praying them to advance him the sum of 750,000 piastres, about £8,000; and for security he offered them bills on Constantinople. When the security in question was mentioned all the capitalists expressed their perfect confidence in its value, but deeply regretted they could not avail themselves of the investment. Haireddin expostulated, but failed in raising the amount. A small instalment was latterly collected by some means or other and forwarded to Kars.

The imperfect manner in which the taxes are collected weighs unfortunately on the poorer class, who, I must say, have been overburdened, and who, particularly the villagers, are at this moment in the greatest distress. We will hope that the independence of the Sultan once firmly established, measures will be taken to root out the fat and lazy pachas who have thriven on the ruin of the peasantry, and that an equitable and benign government, by abolishing abuses and encouraging agriculture, will transform into a garden of plenty these rich and fruitful regions now uncultivated and neglected. The intelligence of the disgrace of Ahmet Pacha and his dismissal from the command-in-chief had caused here the most lively satisfaction. At Kars the news created among the troops still greater pleasure, for they were eye-witnesses and victims to the Muchir's incapacity. Turkey is verily a curious

country, the more so now that the bowstring is abolished.

In Europe a commander-in-chief, or a high functionary, if dismissed from the service of his sovereign for notable misconduct, to use in this case a very mild expression, would wish, in the very bitterness of the disgrace, for the grave to close on his abashed head. Here nothing of the kind is observable, Ahmet Pacha will, like scores of others have done before him, retire with his ill-acquired gains to a semi-banishment, and in a few months, with bribing and intriguing, will perhaps be again in power.

I have already mentioned that some 9000 men were stationed in this city. The regular garrison consisted, in time of peace, of 2500 regular troops. The barracks were now filled, and many of the troops were quartered in the numerous khans where the peaceful Persian merchant formerly dwelt with his precious bales of silks and shawls. In the chief street of Erzeroum every sixth house was a khan, and filled with soldiers. Two sentinels were stationed at the entrance of each one, and the effect was not unlike that of a city in a state of siege.

I visited some of these khans and chatted with the men, examined their food, and gained a tolerable insight into their military condition. The greater number of the troops then quartered in Erzeroum were from this neighbourhood, and, like the rest of

the inhabitants of this cold but healthy clime, were well grown and strongly built men. The water here is excellent, and possesses many healthy qualities. Both sexes have beautiful rosy complexions, and the soldiers from this region are easily distinguished from the sallow Constantinopolitan or the tawny Egyptian. Their healthy red and white cheeks struck envy in my heart, and they must have marvelled at the pale-faced Londoner, who was asking them all kinds of indiscreet questions.

The materials from which I shape my description of the soldier's condition in Turkey were obtained from men of different regiments. The officers whom I questioned seemed perfectly ignorant on this as on every other subject.

Every year the chief of the village collects together all the young men who have reached the age of twenty, and who are without physical defects. A list of these is drawn up, and they proceed to draw lots for the conscription. The number of conscripts which the village has to furnish being completed, the unlucky recruits are marched off to the chief town of the province, where they are drilled and transferred into Nizam, or regular troops. In a town the local authorities assist at the proceedings of the conscription. The young men who are fortunate enough to escape the first drawing have no great reason for congratulation, for

they are obliged to draw the five following years, in one or other of which they may be less successful. When a man has faced the five stated conscriptions without falling on an unlucky number, he is free from active service, and is placed on the category of rediffs. The class termed rediff comprises the above, and also the soldier who, having served his five years, returns to his home. The rediffs are called out only one month in the year, for drill and exercise. They are superintended by a captain or major, who visits each district for that purpose. The rediffs are liable to be called out in time of war, and at this moment every rediff in the empire has joined the regular army. The conscript, on arriving at the town he has been ordered to, is clothed in uniform, and subjected to a drill of from three to four hours a day. The conscripts drawn at Trebizond, Sinope, Samsoon, and the sea-coast are sent to Constantinople to serve as sailors.

In forming a regiment, no especial attention is directed to the size of the men; and, provided they be hearty, tall and small men stand in the same rank and file. The soldier is drilled once a day in the open air, weather permitting, and in bad weather or winter, in barracks. Three or four times a year there are inspections, reviews, and sham fights.

The clothing of the private soldier is, in time of peace, excellent, and yearly he receives two new suits, a summer and a winter one. Should he mis-

lay a jacket or any trifling article of clothing, he generally tries to replace it from his own resources, but if a great-coat be stolen, or any article which he cannot replace for want of means, then he applies to his captain, who sees that he is furnished with another without deduction from his pay.

The pay of the infantry and cavalry man is 20 piastres a month, or about 3*s*. 4*d*. of our money. The artillerymen, who are selected for their superior intelligence, receive 25 piastres, or 4*s*. 2*d*. a month. The soldier, besides being well clothed is well fed, and his rations are plentiful; I have seen them at their meals, and can testify both to the quantity and quality of their food.* There always remained a good portion over and above what they could eat, and this was scraped together into large tubs, which were placed before the khans, and taken away by the poor.

In the morning at nine the men received a thick rice soup; and two pounds of bread, which lasted them the twenty-four hours. In the afternoon, at four, or two hours before sunset, they had again rice soup followed by a dish of meat and vegetables. The allowance of meat per man was three-quarters of a pound. Ten men and a corporal unite their rations and mess together. On Thursdays and Saturdays the rice soup was exchanged for pillau.

I am sorry to add, that at Kars the troops fared

* In the field the above abundance does not hold good.

anything but like the above. There, unfortunately, scarcity and mismanagement sadly reduced the soldiers' rations. However in ordinary times, and at Erzeroum, the food of the military was as I have described it.

I now come to a sore point, which is the ruin of the service, namely, the manner in which promotion is carried on. A private soldier, if he conducts himself well and is intelligent, will in time advance to be corporal; but if he has a friend a major, or perhaps a cousin who is a colonel, all is well, and he will rapidly pass through the grades of sergeant, lieutenant, &c. &c., and in a month may find himself a captain. Everything is managed by influence, intrigue, or bribery, and true merit may remain a sergeant-major. With regard to the higher grades, these are passed through with even greater facility, provided the party possesses money, and influence with the seraskier, or with some high functionary. The natural consequence of this general corruption with regard to promotion is, that the officers, with few exceptions, are totally ignorant and incapable of filling the positions they hold, and thence the imbecility we have witnessed at Sinope and in the autumn campaign in Asia. In describing the different pachas who assisted in mismanaging the Anatolian army, I shall advert to this topic.

The punishment in the army is regulated ac-

cording to a code which has been drawn up in a merciful manner. Punishment by death has been abolished in the Turkish service. At drill, if a man be inattentive or lazy, the drill sergeant will correct him with a few slaps on the face. If caught with improper characters, the soldier is punished by ten days' confinement. For desertion, by three months in irons, and 120 lashes on the feet. Impertinence on the part of a private to his officer is corrected with a few dozen lashes on the back. If a soldier be guilty of striking his superior officer, the expiation is severe, he is confined for five or more years in gaol.

Some twelve years ago, before the Tanzimat was proclaimed, the military code was draconic in its severity. Desertion, or any great offence, was punished by the culprit being attached to the mouth of a cannon and blown to pieces. Then later milder measures were introduced, and the above offences were punished in the following manner:—the offender was brought out of barracks and tied up; several tschaousch, or sergeants, then approached with strong sticks, with which they belaboured the man's back. Meanwhile a pacha gravely assisted at the ceremony, and marked off every blow on a string of beads which he held in his hand. When 360 blows had been given, the culprit was taken to the hospital. If a sergeant,

out of pity to the sufferer, laid about him with less energy than the pacha thought desirable, he in his turn was stretched out and punished for his good intentions.

When a soldier has served his five years, he is at liberty to return home. The authorities deliver to him a passport, and he enters the class of rediffs. Should he desire to continue in the service, he states his wish to the commanding officer, and on the following morning he receives a gratuity of about five pounds, and is promoted a grade.

With regard to fixed pensions, I find there were none. A wounded and disabled man is assisted in proportion to the nature of his infirmity, and the government acts in similar cases, from what I have learned, in a liberal manner. An aged and infirm soldier will always meet with sympathy and assistance. A rediff is not called upon to enter active service if his father be aged or helpless. Altogether the service is carried on in a paternal manner, and were it not for the wretched ignorance of its officers, would be a most effective one. I was surprised to find in the men I have spoken with much good sense and dignity. They all complained most bitterly of their officers, who left them to be mowed down like grass. For the Sultan they had an enthusiastic regard, and died willingly in his service. A sergeant from the interior of the country

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greatly astonished me with the extent of his information. He enquired, among other questions, the name of that Englishman of whom all the pachas were then talking, and who was so warm a friend of Turkey.* I answered, for the sake of the joke, "Aberdeen." "That is not the name," he replied; "tell me another." From former experience I understood to whom he alluded, so I said "Palmerston." "That is the man," he exclaimed. "May Allah preserve him!" and the good man ran into a torrent of praise, which my dragoman could not keep up with, all to the especial honour of Lord Palmerston. It is marvellous how far and wide the noble Viscount's name has spread abroad. In Armenia I have met with men to whom the existence of European nations and sovereigns was unknown, who believed that England and France were tributaries to the Sublime Porte; but they were aware that a great man whom they called "Pomerston" felt deeply for their harassed Sultan, and followed with sympathy their terrible struggle for independence.

I will add a few details, which may prove interesting, concerning the organisation of the Turkish army, the pay of the officers, and other matters connected with that service.

* England and France had not then declared war with Russia, and the first negotiations at Vienna were being conducted.

The system is, in most instances, a close copy from the French, though at times we observe a startling deviation from the original.

A foot regiment is composed of four battalions of eight companies each. The company reckons ninety-six rank and file, four drummers and fifers, besides a cook, a water-carrier, and a bugler. The non-commissioned officers and subalterns of the company consist of eight corporals, called onbachi, whose pay is 5*s.* per month, eight sergeants, called tschaousch, whose pay is 6*s.* 8*d.* per month, one sergeant-major whose pay is 16*s.* 8*d.* per month, a second lieutenant, called milasim souva, whose pay is 26*s.*, and a first lieutenant, called milasim evet, whose pay is 35*s.* per month.

All the above receive the same rations as the privates, from whom in fact they are scarcely distinct. I may here remark, that to the want of good non-commissioned officers and subalterns must be attributed the reason that prevents the Turkish army from reaching that high state of discipline and perfection to which the condition and tractability of the private soldier would entitle it.

What the French term *esprit de corps* does not exist in the Ottoman service. Nothing, for instance, would be more shocking to the eyes of an English disciplinarian than to see a first lieutenant walking hand in hand, or playing back-gammon with a

private soldier. In Turkey this is a common and unnoticed occurrence. With a captain, called yuzbachi, who receives 50*s.* a month, and rations for two, the company is complete, and numbers 120 men. A battalion, including the officers, comprises 960 men, and a regiment forms a total of 3856 bayonets. A captain-adjutant, called kol-assi, receives £5 10*s.* a month, and rations for two. I have omitted the ensign, whose pay is 50*s.* the month. A major (binbashi) receives a monthly pay of £9 10*s.*, with rations for four. A lieutenant-colonel (caimakan), £10 a month. A colonel (mirralai), £16 a month; a brigadier-general (liva), £70 a month; a general of division (ferrik), both pachas, £140 a month; and a commander-in-chief (muchir), including the value of his rations, receives the enormous monthly pay of £1000.

Two brigades, comprised of two regiments each, form a division. An army or a camp, which is called an ordu, is composed of thirty-two battalions supported by seventy-two pieces of artillery, and 6608 artillerymen. The cavalry of an ordu numbers four "allais" of about 1300 men each. The cost to government for each man, including pay, food, clothing and bedding, amounts in time of peace to about £14 a year.

The behaviour of the soldiery at Erzeroum was most exemplary; no violence was ever committed,

nor did I hear of any serious complaints against their honesty. The moral character of the Turkish soldiery is irreproachable. With the bashi-bazooks, or irregulars, it was otherwise; but of these gentlemen I shall have much to record in another place.

The Armenian merchants and traders were greatly alarmed at the latter, and apprehended a general massacre of the christian population in case of any decided success on the part of the Russians. It is true the fears of that industrious but faint-hearted people are easily aroused.

The Armenian subjects of the Ottoman empire are as desirous of the success of the Russian arms as the Greeks. I except, of course, a few enlightened men who, while they are vexed at heart at the abased position their race occupies in the empire, yet are aware that their condition would not be improved under the despotism of the north. I will also except the numerous bankers and money-lenders of the Armenian creed, in whose books and ledgers the names of so many pachas figure, and on the wrong side. These cannot wish for the triumph of the Muscovite; for, in that case, what would become of their debtors? But the middle and lower ranks of Armenians are Russian to the back bone. Their sympathy will avail the cause of the Czar but little; for though they are industrious and well-behaved, at the same time they are the most arrant cowards

imaginable. After the disaster sustained by the Turkish navy at Sinope, the secret joy experienced by the Armenians in this city, the ancient capital of their kingdom, was delirious. It was reported that they secretly offered up thanksgivings to the Almighty, for the Russian success, in their cathedral church. The rumour (perhaps unfounded) of this thanksgiving soon oozed out, and came to the ears of the Turks, who were not over-pleased, as may be understood. The pacha was soon informed of the occurrence, and sent for the head of the Armenian hierarchy here. That ecclesiastic vowed there was no foundation for the report; and that if the thanksgiving in question had taken place it was without his knowledge. The pacha dismissed him with a few words of admonition, and recommended him most strongly to remove the effects of the thanks on the following sabbath.

These few words of significant warning had a potent effect on the mind of his Eminence, and, consequently, at the first opportunity the prayers of thanksgiving were officially revoked and cursed, so that the minds of the Turks might be set at rest. I was unable to ascertain if the thanksgiving did take place or not; at all events the denunciation and curse occurred. The Armenians and Turks inwardly detest each other, and from other reasons than those of religion and creed. In former times the poor

Armenians suffered greatly from the barbarous cruelty of their masters the Turks, and their social degradation was extreme; but during the occupation of Armenia in the last war by the Russians, they took an eclatant revenge, and, as I will narrate, sorely humiliated the arrogant Mussulman.

In occupying Armenia it became evident to the government of the Czar that by fomenting the hatred of the two races a signal advantage would accrue to Russia. The large Russian provinces on the Caspian Sea required inhabitants, and what could be more desirable than to obtain as settlers the industrious, intelligent, peaceful, and money-making Armenian? Russian policy set to work, and with the greatest success. The haughty Turk was disarmed, and his weapons given to the Armenian. Who will describe the sensations of inward fury that agitated the heart of the Mussulman when this indignity was offered to his self-esteem? Now, the places were changed; the tables were turned. Armed to the teeth, the former slave was now master. The crouching Armenian raised his head, and lorded it right mightily over the fallen Turk. Encouraged and exasperated by the wily Russian, who stirred up the recollections of former wrongs in their hearts, the Armenians increased in violence. The Turks were pursued with taunts, insults, and blows. These evils they bore with an admirable patience; the

period of retaliation had not yet arrived, although it loomed already in the distance.

At length the Armenians, emboldened by their success and flushed with their new position, were guilty of a most unpardonable offence. One Friday as the Mussulmans were crowding out of the mosque from prayers, they were met by a number of Armenians who barred their way, and who, after heaping every insult on them, threw a dead dog at the feet of the indignant Turks, and exclaimed, "Behold, O Mahometans, your Prophet." The Turks were furious at this insult, and, to them, unheard of blasphemy, but they were unarmed, and Russian bayonets glistened in the distance. "Baccalum," they muttered, "we shall see; the day of reckoning will come," and they quietly continued their way.

At length that day approached. The humbled Sultan made peace. The time drew near for the Russian to withdraw from the regions he had occupied. Events now proved how well had been calculated the policy of the Czar. As the day drew near for the final evacuation of Erzeroum the courage and spirit of the Armenians rapidly oozed away. When the Russians, who had encouraged them to the committal of deeds of which they now repented, had withdrawn, what vengeance, reflected the Armenian, would the infuriated Turk not take to

wash out the insults their short-lived triumph had accumulated on his person ! This idea haunted the conscience of the Armenians, and, on the day that the Russian army evacuated the soil of Turkey, 5000 families of that creed quitted their native land and accompanied the stranger. Where this immigration would have ended it is impossible to say, had not the Turks seen the necessity of arresting the movement. Their own existence partly depended on the Armenians, who filled all the places of artisans, and all those requiring active industry and intelligence. The Turk, therefore, promised to forgive and to forget. This checked the outward movement, and many who intended leaving now remained.

In time many families, either pining for their native town or disgusted with the Russian rule, returned to Armenia ; but Erzeroum has never recovered from the blow, and bitterly regrets the day when so much intelligence, industry, and capital deserted her walls.

The Turk kept his word with respect to forgiveness, but he has not forgotten ; and now that the old Russian feud has recommenced, the conduct of the Armenians in his hour of defeat haunts him like a spectre.

The common people, the most turbulent of the Turks, now mutter deeply, " You are still safe, but

beware if the Muscovite gains the day, and soils our land with his tread; then, you Armenians at least shall not live to triumph over us once more."

I will conclude this chapter with a little gossip concerning the false reports and silly rumours with which the town was filled, and which the good people swallowed with the greatest gravity. The *canards* could be traced to two parties. The Russian one consisting of Russian subjects, of whom there were eighty or one hundred established at Erzeroum, and the old Turkish party. Each one fibbed against the other with hearty good will, and I am uncertain to which the palm should be awarded. I fancy the Russians excelled with regard to quantity, but for fertility of invention they were beaten by the Turkish party. It really must be considered a happy dispensation of Providence that, from their secluded position, the females here were ignorant of all the awful rumours that were circulated in the bazaar. Fancy the terrible shock old Mrs. Fatma's nervous system would sustain on hearing that the odious Muscovites had taken Kars and were marching on Erzeroum! Imagine the pretty Dodu trembling and fainting at the horrible intelligence that the Cossacks were only ten miles off—pillaging, murdering, and burning everybody and everything. What feeling heart could not rejoice that these tender creatures were spared from so many shocks

to their delicate sensibility? In our favoured isle I dread to picture the mental anguish and tremendous consumption of sal volatile a similar state of things would have entailed.

Well, if the Russian party circulated one morning the report of Kars having been taken and the whole Turkish army cut to pieces, it called forth in the afternoon a counter report of Bucharest having been captured, and the principalities cleared of the Russians.

The Turks even let loose the reins of their imagination at times, so far as actually to assert that the allied fleets had burnt Odessa or Sevastopol.

A rumour was spread one day here, and never lost ground, to the effect that Menschikoff had been taken prisoner, with 300 men. "Let him be brought before me!" the Sultan is said to have exclaimed; and, in obedience to the imperial wish, Menschikoff was paraded through Stamboul with a band of music. One day a messenger, or, as they call them here, a tâtar, of a speculative genius, arrived on a breathless steed, himself apparently exhausted by the rapidity of his ride. He brought the news that the general-in-chief of the Russian army in the principalities, Gortschakoff, had likewise been taken prisoner. It is customary in Turkey for the bearer of good intelligence to be handsomely rewarded, and

our friend the tatar went with his favourable news to the governor, who, in this instance, was not to be deceived, and hinted at bastinado instead of backshish.

CHAPTER VII.

MILITARY PROSPECTS.

IN order to render my description of the events which characterised the campaign in Asia more comprehensible, I will picture to the reader the position and the prospects of the Ottoman army as I found it on my arrival at Erzeroum. In the preceding year, the Turkish forces, under Abdi Pacha and Achmet Pacha had been defeated at Sobattan by the Russians, and had retreated on Kars in an utter state of disorganisation. The morale of the troops was annihilated, and the heavy snow alone prevented the enemy from advancing as he did in 1828 to Erzeroum. The greater part of the Turkish army at Kars had disbanded, and the remainder was decimated by disease and famine. At this moment General Guyon arrived from Damascus with certain powers from the Porte, and by his energy and skill succeeded in organising to some extent the Ottoman forces in Asia. At the same time, Haïreddin Pacha was despatched from Constantinople with the commission

of enquiring into the past conduct of the two commanding Pachas. Haïreddin Pacha, on his arrival at Kars, perceived at once the deplorable condition of the troops, and traced the origin of their sufferings in a great measure to the infamous misdeeds of the superior pachas, who were robbing the military chests at the time when the troops were actually starving. The army at Kars at this moment consisted of about 20,000 bayonets. The troops were without winter clothing and without food, whilst typhus fever broke out in the camp and spread with fatal rapidity amongst the unhappy soldiers. In consequence of Haïreddin Pacha's representation, Abdi Pacha and Achmet Pacha were removed from their command, and sent to Constantinople for trial. That commissioner likewise directed that the fortifications of Kars, which were insignificant, should be strengthened. At the same time he adopted every measure that lay in his power to decrease the misery of the troops. The position of the latter was pitiful, although surpassed by that of the irregulars, whose sole subsistence consisted of a daily ration of a pound and a half of coarse flour, which they prepared as they best could. Before the arrival of General Guyon the troops were often from three to five days without regular rations; although, as a matter of course, the government was charged for the same by the

commanding officer. Not alone with famine and disease had these soldiers to contend, but also with the awful cold, amidst a total absence of warm clothing and shoes. Their pay was a year in arrear, and officers commanded them in whom they had no confidence. These united hardships were supported by the army with the most patient resignation, without a single act of insubordination; scarcely with a murmur. The greatest sufferers, as I have already observed, were the bashi-bazooks; many of whom were forced by necessity to dispose of their only property—their horse and arms.

True, nature had conspired against the Turks in this instance; for the road from Erzeroum to Kars being completely lost in the snow the transport of provisions was slow and difficult. The journey to Kars from Erzeroum, usually undertaken in five days, could not then be performed in fifteen. A little foresight might have prevented this famine and its constant attendant disease. The Russians—who, heaven knows, are improvident enough, and whose chiefs are surpassed in speculation only by the Turks, were in the land of plenty, and had immense stocks of flour in Alexandropol to fall back on.

This grain, be it remarked, had all been purchased during the period of the last two years in the Turkish provinces, and this act of Russian policy

had been successful; for in those very provinces there now reigned famine.

Haïreddin Pacha, who displayed throughout his mission great energy and intelligence, attempted, though with little result, to establish better communications with Kars, and to inspire the civil officials with greater activity. On his arrival at Erzeroum he expressed his great displeasure at the neglectful way in which public business was carried on there. He was greatly annoyed, either with the incapacity or the indolence displayed by most of the high functionaries. His Excellency assembled them all, and point blank reproached each one with his faults, and blamed them severely for their want of patriotism and honesty.

This step, while it pleased and encouraged the population and soldiery, deeply humiliated the officials, who did not neglect the first opportunity to avenge their wounded pride. The elevated rank and power of Haïreddin Pacha, prevented them from openly showing the extent of their feelings. Immediately on his arrival Haïreddin Pacha assembled in council all the local authorities, and laid before them a list of the wants of the army, and he demanded the immediate collection of supplies for seven months, that is, enough to have lasted until the next September harvest. This province alone would have found it impossible to meet that demand ;

consequently the deficiency was made up from Sivas, Tokat, Diarbekir, and other Pachalics.

Haïreddin Pacha was surprised to find the military at Erzeroum (what was his astonishment at Kars?) so ill provided for in bedding and other necessaries; but he spoke encouragingly to the men, promised to do his utmost to lessen their wants, and, as I have described in another chapter, gave them one month's pay on account.

The bankers, to whom he applied for a loan, were secretly persuaded by the comptroller (one of the officials he had reprimanded) to refuse; that official informed them, as a secret, that as peace would soon be declared, they would lose their money. The bankers offered to advance Haïreddin Pacha on his own acceptance 1000*l.*, which he indignantly declined.

To facilitate the transport of provisions some snow-ploughs, on the Norwegian model, were constructed, in order to open the roads.

The arrival of Haïreddin Pacha at Kars, on his mission of mercy, greatly encouraged the army, and his beneficial presence was soon observed by the decreased sufferings of the troops. On his arrival at Kars he left his suite and entered the town privately. Achmet Pacha, the commander-in-chief, had prepared a public reception in his honour, and was about to leave the Serail when Haïreddin

entered. A most stormy and unoriental scene ensued, and Haïreddin Pacha censured the assembled generals, in the severest terms, for their incapacity and misconduct.

The bakers at Kars next received a good lesson. Hitherto the bread supplied to the troops had been most unsatisfactory, both in quality and quantity, and the contractors had made rapid fortunes. Haïreddin Pacha summoned the principal contractor, who had a secret partner in the commander-in-chief, Achmet Pacha, and expostulated with him. The contractor admitted that the bread was not good, and promised to remedy it on the morrow. The morrow came with the same black gritty loaves and no improvement. The pacha once more sent for the baker, who again promised that the next day's bread should be better. This scene was repeated three days following, and on the third day the bread was, if anything, a little worse. Haïreddin Pacha then treated the contractor, who was a Greek and a millionaire, to a little Turkish justice. He caused five large loaves to be brought to the palace, and taking out all the filthy, black, coarse crumb, he forced the contractor to swallow the whole quantity. This worthy was carried out swollen to nearly double his usual breadth, and cured of defrauding the poor soldier. At Erzeroum the bakers were likewise called to account, and

threatened to be bastinadoed before their own shops, if the bread did not sensibly improve.

Since the departure from Constantinople of Haïreddin Pacha, Mehemet Ali Pacha, brother-in-law to the Sultan, and minister of war, had fallen from power, and had been succeeded by Rizza Pacha, the present minister. The late seraskier, before his fall, had named to the command in chief of the army of Anatolia Ismail Pasha, who had gained an excellent reputation at Kalafat, and who now commands on the Danube. The intelligence of his nomination had produced at Erzeroum and Kars the most lively satisfaction, and his tried energy and courage inspired every class of the population with hope and confidence in the future. Unfortunately the choice of the late seraskier was not confirmed by his successor, and Zarif Mustapha Pacha, the governor of the province of Erzeroum, was appointed to the supreme command. I shall have so often to record the name of this worthy, that I reserve to another chapter the full account of his previous history. Up to the time of his nomination as commander-in-chief he had enjoyed the character of being an able man, and one likely to accept the advice of Europeans. The consulate body, in particular, were pleased with his appointment, and anticipated a great improvement in the condition of the army. During his governorship

of Erzeroum, Zarif Mustapha Pacha had distinguished himself by his activity and zeal for the public service; but these admirable qualities did not survive his unexpected promotion. Of course everybody visited this new Muchir (field-marshal) to congratulate him upon his recent elevation, and as I might perhaps have required his assistance at Kars, I considered it advisable also to pay him my compliments. Accompanied, therefore, by Mr. Zohrab, dragoman to the British consulate, I made my way one morning through the filthy streets of Erzeroum to the palace of the governor. The said palace was a broken-down building, which had seen the reign of some four hundred governors without having been repaired by any one of them. A military band was drawn up in the court-yard, and notwithstanding the bitter cold performed some wonderful Turkish music. Before the windows of the palace fifty or sixty dogs were feeding on the carcase of a lately expired horse, and varied their gastronomic enjoyment by occasional pitched battles.

Notwithstanding the pressure of business, his Excellency the Muchir was kind enough to receive me, and after having exchanged with him a few compliments, I was conducted from the public room in which we had been introduced to a private apartment in another wing of the palace. After we had listened for some few minutes to the Turkish band,

which struck up the old familiar "*Di tanti palpiti*," I was rejoined by his Excellency, who most politely bade me be seated. I have not the slightest intention of overwhelming the reader with all the little details of a Turkish reception. A visit to one Pacha resembles to the letter a visit to all Pachas. You are offered everywhere coffee and a chibouk, the difference only existing in the beauty of the cups, or in the size of the diamonds which ornament the amber mouthpiece of the pipe. The Muchir spoke a little French, but not sufficient to dispense with a dragoman. In fact, he was arrested at "*Comment vous portez vous?*" In person he was short but well built, his face pleasing and amiable looking, and his whole manner was impressed with that natural dignity which seems inborn with the Turk. His Excellency asked anxiously for news from Europe, and, fortunately, I had just received intelligence from England. I gave an account of her Majesty's opening speech in parliament, and of the great military and naval preparations making both in England and France. All this pleased him exceedingly, and after a few observations on the state of public opinion in England, he remarked that surely Nicholas must be mad. I quite entered into the views of his Excellency. During our conversation officials had been passing in and out with papers for the Muchir's signature, and now an

orderly approached with some verses that had been written by a soldier in honour of the day. The Muchir laughed over the verses, which were apparently not overgood, and gave orders for the soldier poet to be rewarded. A pretty little child, the daughter of one of his secretaries, ran into the room and jumped into the Pacha's arms, and after a little romp was fetched away again.

In reply to my congratulations, Zarif Pacha observed, that the honour conferred upon him by his highness the Sultan was very great, and, to him, unexpected; "but," he continued, "the army is in a very bad condition; something unfortunate may happen, and I shall be blamed, although I may have worked with all honesty and energy."

I observed to his Excellency that there was still time to reorganise the army, and that success was certain if he displayed that firmness of will before which all obstacles disappear, and which he had the reputation of possessing. "I have accepted," he replied, "the responsibility of the command in chief, and may my work be successful; at least, none can say that under my rule the province of Erzeroum has not prospered. I leave," he continued, "the roads secure and the country in quiet. The poor are supplied with work, and truly I have treated every man in the province as my friend." Before I took my leave the Muchir

expressed a hope that on my arrival at Kars I should not neglect to renew my visit, and desired me to have recourse to him should any impediment in the execution of my mission arise.

I may add that all this great civility did not prevent the Muchir from manifesting intentions, a few months later, of removing Colonel Thorne and myself from the camp at Kars. The magic name of Redcliffe, however, speedily checked those amiable designs.

The appointment of Zarif Mustapha Pacha was doomed to prove unfortunate for the interests of the Turkish Empire in Asia, and it would have been far more desirable for his own reputation, as we shall see hereafter, had he remained in the less responsible post of governor of Erzeroum.

On his departure for the army at Kars he was succeeded in his Pachalic by Fezullah Pacha, late Caimakan of Schilder. This selection was at the time considered most unfortunate, and the foreign consuls and the whole population were aghast at his nomination to the governorship of the second province in the Empire. The penetration of the consular body, as of the population, was destined to be at fault in this instance, as was the case, only in the contrary direction, with the new Muchir. Of the latter great success was expected and not fulfilled, whilst poor Fezullah Pacha displayed

qualities for which no one had ever given him credit.

In a short time the new governor gave general satisfaction. All his measures tended to the improvement of the town and province. He refused bribes, and attempted to put down drunkenness, which is rather prevalent in these regions. The conduct of the Pacha illustrates an observation I have made, of the great facility with which the Turks can shake off old habits and vices. In Europe a confirmed drunkard would find it impossible to leave off suddenly drinking to excess; he would require a cure by degrees. Here quite the contrary is to be remarked. A man who, like Fezullah Pacha, was a known drunkard, with a disreputable character—so much so that his nomination had dismayed the town—had been suddenly transformed into an active, sober, and honourable authority.

The Turkish government, aroused to activity by the deplorable accounts of the misery to which the Anatolian army had been reduced, adopted the measures that lay in its power to relieve the sufferings of the troops. Provisions in abundance were despatched to Trebizond for the army of Kars, but owing to the absence of means of transport they never arrived at their destination. At the same time the Porte collected all its military

resources, in order to open worthily the approaching campaign. The different regiments distributed over Kurdistan and Arabistan were ordered to advance towards Kars, whilst the rediff, or militia, battalions were collected from their quiet homes in the provinces of Tokat and Sivas, and commanded to march in the same direction. Bands of Arab and Syrian bashi-bazooks set out on their long and wearisome journey from their sultry deserts to the chilling cold of Armenia. Cases of ammunition and thousands of cannon balls were despatched from Stamboul to Kars; for, be it known, that every cartridge fired on the confines of Georgia is manufactured at Constantinople—to such a pitch has centralisation and ignorance attained in Turkey. The troops that arrived at Erzeroum were detained there until more auspicious weather would permit them to continue their march to Kars. Measures were also adopted by the authorities at Erzeroum to put an end to the misery to which the villagers were subjected by the passage of troops.

Orders were issued to the villages between Erzeroum and Kars, that nothing should be supplied to troops or officers passing through without payment. The heads of the villages were also instructed to send in petitions showing by whom they had been hitherto maltreated, so as to enable the authorities to redress their wrongs.

CHAPTER VIII.

ERZEROUH TO KARS.

I STARTED from Erzeroum for Kars on the 18th of March. The day previous to my departure I passed in making the necessary preparations for a prolonged stay at the head-quarters of the Anatolian army. Provisions, china, grocery wares, in fact everything that I could imagine would be of service to me I purchased. I paid my adieus to the British and French Consuls, and to my friend Mr. Peabody, the American missionary. Colonel Thorne would not be prevailed upon to start until the month of April, so I unwillingly left him behind. The departure of a traveller was so unusual an occurrence in Erzeroum, that a crowd of Armenians and Turks had congregated round the door of the house I occupied, and were engaged in trying to guess what the two large boxes could possibly contain. George, my dragoman, was got up in his usual ferocious style, and was armed to the teeth. I had with great difficulty engaged a groom, for the reported

terrors of the condition of Kars had impressed themselves to such an extent upon the minds of the population of Erzeroum that none would accept the situation. This groom was an Armenian; some accident had deprived him in early age of the right eye, whilst unrelenting Nature had considerably weakened the power of vision of his left orb. His services were, therefore, of a very limited nature. I had been persuaded to forbear purchasing horses in Erzeroum, as at Kars I should probably obtain them at a much cheaper price. This I had done, and, with the exception of a little Persian horse that had taken my fancy, I withstood all the entreaties of the Erzeroum horse-dealers. I had experienced much difficulty in obtaining baggage-horses for the journey, as the owners feared, with reason, that their property would be detained at Kars for the public service. My dragoman had succeeded in procuring a horse, but the groom was mounted on a small undergrown donkey, which sorely tried his dignity. The baggage was divided between horses and donkeys. Amongst the crowd that I described as having assembled to witness our departure, were all the relations and friends of the one-eyed groom. They evidently considered him as a man rushing wildly on his fate, and employed every persuasion to prevent him from undertaking the journey. He, however, withstood manfully every attempt of his

amiable relations, and mounted his donkey. As we were on the point of starting, the old father and mother threw their arms round the neck of their departing son, and sobbed violently. The latter then pronounced, with great solemnity, to his assembled friends a vow ; firstly, never to approach within sight of the Russians ; and, secondly, not to touch flesh or fowl until the expiration of Lent. The latter vow, I may observe in parenthesis, he broke the same evening ; but then he fulfilled the first with religious exactitude.

The weather, which had been most unfavourable for some weeks past, cleared up in the most auspicious manner on the day of my departure ; and I enjoyed, considering the time of year, a rapid and not unpleasant journey. Leaving behind the dirty and disagreeable town of Erzeroum, once so flourishing and now decayed, the road leads over a few small hills into a vast plain. I found the roads so far excellent, owing to the numbers of cannon and large caravans of ammunition and provisions that had passed over the snow within the last few weeks. On one side of the plain, at a distance of six hours' journey from Erzeroum, stands the town of Hassan-Kaleh, where I stopped the night. This town, with its black houses and walls standing out in bold relief from the white snow-covered plain, meets the eye shortly after leaving Erzeroum, and sadly deceives

the impatient traveller, to whom it seems but a few miles distant. Signs of the approaching spring flew heavily along in the shape of flocks of wild ducks, which appeared, from their indifference to our presence, to dwell in happy ignorance of the existence alike of guns and fowlers. Hassan-Kaleh, with its imposing masses of fallen walls and towers, is renowned for the warm mineral baths which abound there. The fortifications were of vast strength and importance before the age of gunpowder, but are now in ruins. In the last war the Russians took the fortress after a very slight resistance, and completely dismantled it. The marks of the Russian cannon balls can be traced on the crumbling walls. The town is dominated by a large rock, on which are the remains of a citadel, once, also, of great strength. Passing over a small bridge we came to a stream of mineral water, part of which was conveyed through some baths; but, swollen by the melting snow, the warm, smoking stream poured over the road, forming small ponds, in which some buffaloes and cows were bathing with the most lively satisfaction. A small path led through large massive gates, along the fallen walls of the fortress. The stern gloomy ruins conjured up visions of romance, which were speedily dispelled on entering the squalid and dirty town. Like all Turkish towns, dirt was the prevailing element in Hassan-Kaleh;

and, as usual, we encountered there mud huts, in which the poor had taken refuge. The streets presented the customary features of mounds of frozen snow, and deep holes, which threatened to engulf the horse and rider. On each side were the rows of small shops, which afford food for reflection as to how the owners can gain a living, as no one is ever seen to buy anything. There sat the owners with a calm dignity that would have done honour to the Bench, in the midst of their wares, the total value of which perhaps did not exceed fifty shillings. The khan was crowded with strings of mules, horses, and their drivers, so that I was obliged to take refuge in a small coffee-house. A party of jovial travellers occupied the major part of the room, and passed the night in singing Turkish songs of the most dreary nature. It was long past midnight ere I closed my eyes.

Escaping from Hassan-Kaleh at day-break, we wound our way along the plain of the same name, and at length caught up a string of caravans, laden with ammunition, and what was probably more welcome to the troops, with provisions. Other caravans had been detained, from want of accommodation, at the numerous villages which stud the plain, and, joining us, they increased the number of mules and horses to some five hundred. My horse, a playful young Persian, had a vicious propensity of seizing every horse he passed by the tail, and his excitement

at the prospect of darting at five hundred tails was, as may be imagined, most lively. This amiable weakness on the part of my animal brought me, however, into trouble, for a mule, resenting the outrage offered to his tail, commenced kicking violently at the horse, who, by a skilful demi-volte, avoided the danger, but at the same time I received a severe kick on the left leg. Fortunately my heavy riding boot offered some protection from the blow, which would otherwise have been of consequence. Having soothed my injured feelings by soundly thrashing the mule, I pushed on, but was soon brought to a stand-still by an unexpected and amusing incident. Approaching us, with measured and dignified steps, were two camels laden with goods from Persia. These were the first camels I had seen in this part of Asia, and most uncomfortable did they look in the midst of the snow. Horses have a natural aversion to the camel, and the terror excited by these two "ships of the desert" was greatly increased by the fact that, owing to their great rarity, their existence was unknown to most of the horses which formed this long caravan. These had now an opportunity of increasing their knowledge of natural history. At the sight of the camels the first horse gave signs of alarm, and the panic spread with the rapidity peculiar to panics, down the whole of the immense line of animals. It was a curious sight to see venerable old

horses that, during a long life, had scorned to be seduced into a trot, now plunge and rear like giddy colts, quite heedless of the heavy burdens with which they were laden. The mules displayed a noble spirit of emulation, and did their utmost to increase the confusion. Even little donkeys, that by some means or other had been impressed into the service of carrying ammunition, brayed and kicked with the fiery energy of mules. These donkeys, by the by, differed radically from the Constantinople ones; from those respectable and philosophic-looking asses, on which sober Muftis delight to stride—animals as sleek and fat as the steady-going cobs of our right reverends at home. My horse was in a state of ecstatic doubt, delighted beyond measure at the neighing and kicking that was going on, and to which he was a large contributor, but doubtful of the propriety of biting a camel's tail. In the meantime the objects of this confusion passed tranquilly on, either unconscious of the excitement their presence had caused, or looking upon the whole as a great and misplaced display of levity. In good time all the animals recovered, fortunately, their usual pace and steady behaviour.

Several wolves came within view during the day, but never within pistol range. Towards evening we came to a village where we passed the night. When I say that I "passed the night," it must not be supposed that, having wrapped myself up in my

cloak, I went quietly off to sleep. Nothing of the kind; my nights were passed in savage conflicts with the fleas, and a warfare more disheartening cannot be imagined. To humble a haughty man's spirit, and convince him of the vanity of human power, I would recommend placing him in a nest of Turkish fleas. A more horrible creature surely does not exist than this flea, combining, as it does, the ferocity of the Kurd, the cunning of the Turcoman, and the agility of the Arab.

On the following morning we continued our journey, and soon came up to two large field-pieces placed on sleighs, and drawn by ninety oxen. The progress of the team was not very rapid, as great difficulty was experienced in engaging the animals to draw together. We presently overtook a man in half uniform, with long streaming hair. Struck with his appearance, I inquired the reason of his hair being so long, and he replied that he was about joining the army, and had made a vow not to touch his locks until the Muscovite was driven out of Georgia. I have since marvelled at the great length to which this individual's hair must by this time have attained. Probably he was some insolvent hair-dresser with a suddenly acquired dislike to the scissors. In the evening I quartered on an old Turk, one of the old school. His house was scrupulously clean and neat, and he was himself the ideal of a venerable old man.

His snow-white turban was not whiter than the long beard that hung down his breast, and he possessed that natural dignity which is peculiar to the Turkish race. With the greatest hospitality the good old man prepared a grand feast for me, which was brought in to my surprise. In return, I presented him with all the tea and sugar I had with me, which afforded him great pleasure. I also gave him a couple of wax candles, which were the first he had ever seen, and still more delighted him. He gave me a long yarn about a robber chief, whose castle I should have to pass the following day, and who in his time had, it appears, been a kind of hero on a small scale. My old host soon departed, and I heard that he was calling on all his friends in the village, showing them the candles, which, "Wallah!" never required snuffing, and which an Englishman, who had come even further than Stamboul, had presented to him. These candles will be carefully preserved, and considered an heir-loom in the family.

The next day we came unexpectedly into a beautiful little valley where not the slightest atom of snow was visible. This sudden change was most pleasing, and it was with regret that I passed again over the hills into the snowy regions. Herds of goats were skipping about the valley, and the whole of the population were working in the fields. We passed a murderer who was going to be tried at

Constantinople, and was proceeding there under escort. The escort and the murderer were amicably chatting and smoking together.

In the journey from Trebizond to Erzeroum we had encountered mostly khans where we passed the night in gloomy discomfort. These khans had been established in some fortunate era of the country's prosperity, but were now sinking rapidly into decay. Even in this respect the decrepitude of the Ottoman race may be perceived. The magnificent fountains, that were once erected by private benevolence to refresh the thirsty traveller on his weary journey along the high roads, have either disappeared entirely or are choked up with stones and rubbish. The khans, constructed by the munificence of the state, for the gratuitous reception of the poor traveller, have been allowed to fall into ruin, and in a few years will probably have disappeared. There are here few signs of the past, and no hopes of the future. Along the road from Erzeroum to Kars not a single khan exists, but, then, villages are plentiful. I had ample opportunities during my roamings over the country of studying the Turkish villagers, and a more patriarchal and excellent people I have never encountered. I generally arrived at a village late in the evening, when the grey shadows were reflected over the white snow-covered ground. At times the village would

be almost invisible, so peculiarly are the houses constructed. The generality of the latter are built against elevated ground, which obviously spared the employment of much wood. But, then, an inconvenience would arise from the fact that often, when the snow covered the ground, cattle or travellers deviated from the road, and suddenly found themselves sinking through the roof into the rooms below. I once saw General Kmeti sink through a house in this manner. He descended into the harem of the dwelling, where a female was tranquilly embroidering. The dismay of the poor creature may be imagined on seeing a horse and cavalier of a sudden precipitated at her feet. On this occasion General Kmeti escaped with a severe shock to his system and a damaged arm, whilst the horse, wonderful to relate, was unhurt.

A village generally comprises thirty or forty families. The houses are constructed of wood and roofed in with mud. A small doorway leads along an unlighted passage to the stables, and to a neatly boarded room, illuminated from above by one small opening, sometimes covered with oiled paper. Elevated banks run parallel with the room. A rudely-constructed opening serves as fire-place and chimney. The stables contain animals of every description, congregated in delicious confusion; buffaloes, horses, sheep, and goats, all heaped together, along

with oxen and asses. A certain perfume was consequently thrown over the establishment, which in warm weather was perfectly irresistible. Added to this discomfort were the fleas, and their allies, with which the mats and inhabitants actually swarmed. On entering a village the news would rapidly spread that a traveller had arrived, and presently the entire male population appeared, whilst the females peeped with laudable curiosity from behind doors, carts, heaps of fire manure, and other romantic situations. The elder of the village then approached, and we exchanged salutations. A conversation then ensued between the old gentleman and my dragoman, and directly it was ascertained that I was an Englishman the most hospitable welcome would be offered me. The best house was prepared, a roaring fire lighted, and the wooden banks covered with comfortable bedding. Then dinner would appear, to the preparation of which the united gastronomic talent of the place had contributed. This would probably consist of a soup which had a sour-sweet taste, not at all unpalatable, followed by fried eggs, butter, and honey; the banquet would be washed down with warm milk. After dinner the host and the whole village entered the room and sat themselves down on the ground. I found it impossible to avoid this post-prandial infliction, so in the end I conformed to the habits of the

people. Pipes would be produced, and question after question put to the dragoman respecting Stamboul, the Sultan, and other extraordinary topics, to which he replied with more or less adhesion to the strict truth. I then produced coffee and sugar, the sight of which inspired enthusiasm in the assembly. Sugar is a great rarity in the village houses and much esteemed. The greatest treat of all, however, was a cup of tea, which was a rarer article even than sugar, and of which they were particularly fond. Towards nine o'clock the assembly would drop off one by one, but never without examining my pistols, sabre, and even my clothes. The old host would alone remain, and continue the conversation through the dragoman, who, by the expression of his countenance, scarcely appreciated the employment. The good old man would then launch out into a history of his life and that of his sons, who were probably with the army in Kars. He would then inform me of the number of his buffaloes, horses, and sheep, and the prospects of the coming crop. I, in my turn, described some of the wonders of Europe and civilisation. Steam-boats and the electric telegraph were the objects that excited the greatest astonishment, next to that of a nation being governed by a queen. My dragoman (who, I have already said, was a very ingenious fellow) created a constant sensation by his

dramatic description of a railroad. He would commence with the whistle, then imitate the noise of the engine, and conclude with the nervous cries of elderly ladies in passing through a tunnel. He would accompany the dramatic acting with a suitable libretto in Turkish. Immense was the delight he created, and innumerable were the exclamations of "Mashalla! tschoc marafet" (very wonderful). In passing and repassing these villages my appearance was always hailed with joy, principally on account of the entertaining talents of Giorgio. A representation of the railroad would often be requested before dinner (as well as after) until the whole affair became rather monotonous.

The host would converse with me until his pipe was exhausted, and then, with a dignified salutation, he put on his slippers and departed. Then I commenced my night's toilette, which consisted in simply taking off my boots. The fatigue of the day generally procured me pleasant slumbers, the duration of which depended greatly on the inhabitants of the stables and of the matting. At times a revolution would burst out amongst the horses, and spread over the whole of the assembled quadrupeds. Once I was awakened by hard breathing on my face, and on looking up beheld a hideous buffalo calmly gazing at me. At other times goats would chase each other about the room, which by

no means facilitated hearty sleep. In the morning, at daybreak, I rose, performed my ablutions, and quickly breakfasted. Then a kind farewell to all the village, a distribution of piastres, and to horse. I may observe that never was I subjected to rudeness in any Turkish village, nor did I ever miss the most trivial article. On the whole I was greatly struck with the combined simplicity and amiability of the Turkish rural population. Crime is almost unknown there as well as poverty. The property of the peasants consists of their flocks, which supply them with every necessary, and from whose wool they derive an excellent profit. Every family possessed two houses, one for the female members, the other for guests. Each family takes it by turn to receive the traveller, and by this means the burthen of providing for the poor wanderer is divided. In the larger villages an official was maintained, who kept account of the arrivals in the place, and was answerable that travellers were welcomed to the village. Be a man ever so poor hospitality and a welcome await him. In person the Turkish peasantry are well made and robust. Their habits are most frugal. Eggs, butter, cheese, and milk are the chief articles of food, and meat is but rarely touched. In the performance of their religious duties they are most strict. They are plunged as a matter of course in the greatest ignorance, and I never encountered a

man who ever knew his exact age. Lawyers and doctors are unknown in these regions; the people also are amiable and long lived. During my prolonged stay in Asia I met with but few things of which I could approve, or which have since conjured up agreeable reminiscences. But of the peasantry in the Asiatic provinces (always excepting the Armenian villagers, who were surly and interested) I shall ever entertain the highest opinion and pleasing recollections. Nothing occurred on my journey to Kars of any importance. The track led along continual plains of snow without danger or excitement. A mistake in the direction nearly led me astray, for one afternoon I found myself on the banks of the Araxes, on the road to Persia. I fortunately discovered the error in time, and escaped with the loss of a day. At length I gradually drew near to my destination. The weather has been favourable all along, and I performed my journey in the usually allotted period of six days.

The nearer we approached the town the greater was the bustle and activity. Crowds of peasants drawing little sleighs of provisions, and invalid soldiers being taken to neighbouring villages passed us, and we soon came in sight of Kars. Passing by a plain in which was stationed a park of artillery, we entered through a gateway into the town, and I thus found myself at the head-quarters of the army of Anatolia.

CHAPTER IX.

KARS.

THE town of Kars lies to the west of one of the elevated plains that extend from the river Araxes to the Arpa-tschai. The town is, of itself, of no importance, and before the commencement of the present war was scarcely known to Europe even by name. In the terrible confusion which disfigured the latter history of Armenia, Kars formed the capital of a petty kingdom of the same name; but no monuments or other evidence now exist to recall that period. A few enterprising leech merchants, on their way to the leech-ponds of Erivan, would at times wander from their shorter road via Bayazid, in order to visit the Russian town of Gumri, or Alexandropol, which is situated on the frontiers of the two empires, at a distance of twelve leagues from Kars. These, with a few Russian and Greek smugglers, were the only strangers that ever entered the walls of Kars. The quiet inhabitants of that town sustained a galvanic shock at the

outbreak of the war, and on awakening one morning discovered their peaceful native place transformed into the head-quarters of a large army. Regiments of Anatolian, Arabistany, Kurdish, and Constantinopolitan soldiers poured one after the other into the town, whilst swarms of wild bashi-bazooks covered the country like locusts, and with much the same result. After the first excitement had passed away the good inhabitants began to regret olden times, and were aghast at the repeated contributions which were demanded of them. The immense flocks of long-tailed sheep that wandered over the grass plains soon disappeared, being driven away and concealed by their terrified owners. The peasants neglected tilling the ground and sowing their usual crops, from apprehension that the harvest would be reaped for the benefit of others than themselves. Arbitrary contributions were levied on the poor villagers, whose stores of wheat and barley were conveyed away by the agents of the commanding Pacha. In a word, the greatest misery speedily followed in the track of the Ottoman army, destitute as it was of a regular commissariat or of an able chief. The Turkish army marched from Kars in the month of October, 1853, and advanced towards the Russian frontier. Two battles ensued, one of which was doubtful in its issue, but the second, fought at Soobattan, resulted

in the total defeat of the Turks, who fled, as they were doomed to fly the following year, in great disorder on Kars. The town was pillaged by the disbanded soldiery, and two days after the action the Ottoman army in Asia had almost ceased to exist. At this moment General Guyon arrived from Damascus, and undertook the task of re-organising the army. By a great display of energy he succeeded in inspiring the soldiers with a little ardour, and gradually the confusion which reigned on his arrival made way for order and discipline. He seized the military chest, which some of the Pachas had detained, and paid to the soldiers a portion of their arrears. The efforts of General Guyon were, however, neutralised in a great measure by the envy of the native Pachas, who, jealous of his growing influence with the troops, intrigued unceasingly to effect his downfall. Provisions soon became scarce in the surrounding country, and supplies for the troops had to be collected in distant parts of the land. The advent of winter closed all means of communication, and want, aggravated by disease, set in amongst the Turkish army. The soldiers lived from day to day. At times a concealed stock of corn would be discovered in some neighbouring village, and then rations were issued to the troops, but often days passed without any food being furnished to them.

In consequence of this famine and the extreme rigour of the climate, typhus fever speedily broke out in Kars, and decimated the army. At the time of my arrival there, sixty or eighty men were buried daily, whilst the town was one vast hospital.

The population of Kars before the arrival of the Anatolian army consisted of about 15,000 souls, including the fixed garrison of nearly 2000 troops. The town is dominated by an extensive castle, now in ruins, built by the Genoese. The castle of Kars is, without exception, the grandest evidence that remains in the East of the energy and industry of those intrepid adventurers. A rocky hill that rises abruptly from the town forms the basis on which is constructed this citadel. Every prominent rock has been taken advantage of and utilised to the defence of the place. Three massive walls completely protected the inner forts from a coup-de-main, and the ruined pile, now so grand and picturesque, was before the age of gunpowder considered utterly impregnable. The little river Kars-tschai flows at the foot of the rock and washes an eminence on the opposite side that is crowned with a smaller ruin, which in its turn dominates the citadel. In the last war with Russia, when Prince Paskiewitch overran the tablelands of Armenia, a Russian force succeeded in gaining this position, and thus commanded the Castle of Kars and the town. A few shots sufficed to

convince the Turkish garrison of the utter uselessness of resistance, and the citadel consequently surrendered. A high wall connected with the castle and flanked with towers, encircles the town, but suburbs have sprung up beyond that limit and extend into the plains of Kars.

The Kars-tschai, or the river of Kars, is spanned by a stone bridge of ancient construction and flowing into the Arpa-tschai, it forms the boundary of the two empires. The streets of the town are narrow, and, from the accumulation of mud caused by the immense traffic of the army, were nearly impassable. The streets of Balaklava in their worst era were not to be compared to those of Kars, whilst the effluvia from the filth increased the intensity of the prevailing typhus. The houses of the town were of the same construction as those of Erzeroum, and were filled to overflowing with the soldiery. An Armenian church, now transformed into a mosque, is the only building that can lay claim to especial notice, and that more from originality of construction than from any architectural merit. This, as well as all the other mosques of the town and the public baths, had been converted into hospitals for the sick.

This town, similar to Erzeroum, has greatly decayed from its former importance. The walls which encircle it are crumbling to pieces; and, from the heights above, the ancient fortress frowns down

on the low built houses and filthy streets, testifying by its extent to the once prosperous state, and by its ruined battlements to the present fallen fortunes of Kars. As in Erzeroum there are no buildings of architectural excellence, and even the mosques, in which Orientalism often displays a refined sentiment, are tasteless and insignificant. I was much struck during my journey from Trebizond through this portion of the Ottoman Empire, with the sad want of nationality and enterprise which met the eye at every point. Over the whole extent of the country there does not exist a single monument or edifice which, were the present dominant race to be swept away, could betoken "Here reigned the Osmanli." Houses fall to ruin, and the owners, rather than repair them, quit the spot for ever. Through all classes this spirit of "leave the future to care for itself" pervades with equally pernicious results. The Pacha, Governor of the province, enters the palace which his predecessor has abandoned to him, in the same condition as he had found it, and on the pacha's death or removal, his successor will pursue the same line of conduct, and carefully eschew any outlay in repairs or enlargement. The consequence is that the greater number of government houses are such that no English gentleman, even of small means, would condescend to reside in.

Narrow passages conduct along shattered gal-

leries, through which the keen wind whistles jovially into dilapidated rooms, where, however, your feet are lost in gorgeous carpets, while coffee is handed in cups of the most delicate porcelain, encased in rich silver. At the same time costly pipes, with diamond-mounted mouth-pieces, are presented to you by obsequious attendants. The luxury and the dirty crumbling walls both admit a ready explanation. Carpets can be folded up, coffee cups and pipes are easily packed away and removed along with the slaves and attendants; and why, says the pacha, shall I waste my substance in repairs, for the benefit of the man who perhaps the very morrow may succeed me? The absence over the country of trees strikes every traveller's attention. But trees are slow of growth, and the next generation only will reap an advantage from their presence; therefore, reflects the peasant, why should I trouble myself about trees and plantations? To those who, like myself, are at heart friendly to the Ottoman nation, and admire the many virtues of its sons, this state of things is a source of regret. I know no country in the world that for fertility of soil and mineral richness can compete with the provinces of which I write, and yet the earth is uncultivated; and a country that could export its million quarters of wheat, is partly dependant on Russian supplies. The mines of coal,

copper, and silver which abound, are either unworked, or the produce merely swells the profits of the Greek and foreign bankers, who prey upon the government as the Armenian usurers prey upon the Pachas. I will mention one case which was told me by Haireddin Pacha, who saw with sorrow the prevailing mismanagement. A silver mine was worked by government near Trebizond, and the ore was particularly plentiful, and of a superior quality. Besides affording work and bread to the inhabitants of the country, this mine annually returned a nett profit to government of fifteen times its outlay. By accident or mismanagement the mine overflowed with water, and the works were stopped. For a long period no notice was taken of the mine, until a company proposed to empty it, and place it in a working condition, for the performance of which the said company was to receive a stipulated sum from government. This proposition was declined. The same company then proposed to lease the mine from government, and offered to pay a rent equal to the highest profit netted in its most prosperous year. This was also refused, and the mine still remains under water and unworked. To those who are ignorant of the venality and cupidity of the highest officials, this refusal will appear inconceivable. The enlightened and sometimes too benevolent measures adopted at Constantinople are

rarely carried out to their full extent in the provinces, where the subaltern officials, especially those of the more remote districts, act with a degree of irresponsibility detrimental to the general interests. This evil could, however, be easily checked by a display of energy on the part of the authorities at Constantinople. The war in which Turkey is at this moment engaged will have a grand influence at its termination on her future condition. Her statesmen have had a good opportunity of studying her weak as well as her strong points. If Turkey has proved herself to be anything but the inanimate corpse she was supposed, and has displayed a vigour and an energy as admirable as it was unexpected, at the same time she has experienced many severe lessons. Her men in power, aghast at the empty treasury, will have derived a little wholesome experience which may prevent them in future from ruining the country by insane expenditure, and may inspire them with the idea of profiting by the vast resources of the empire. But a great blow will have been struck at the root of the evil which throttles Turkey—namely her system of Pachas.

I will not speak of the ignorance, obstinacy, and jealousy which this body, with a few illustrious exceptions, has unveiled within the few past years, for my present object is only to prove how the interests of the empire and her substance are sacri-

ficed. If the country cannot be governed by local municipalities, and it be thought judicious to persevere in the present state of things, at least reform the most salient abuses. The immense expenditure of the pachas, with their train of servants, and their harem, cause them sooner or later to fall into the hands of the Armenian money-lenders, who are more grasping and ruinous than our Jew usurers at home. These money-lenders must be satisfied, and, if the principal cannot be returned, at least the sixty or eighty per cent. interest must be forthcoming. The allowance of the Pacha, large as it is, is quite inadequate to meet this annual drain added to his usual expenditure, whilst at the same time he considers it imperative to lay aside for the rainy day, for is he not liable to be dismissed from his position at a moment's notice? Thus he becomes venal and rich, whilst the minor officials, imitating their superior, lend him an effectual aid in ruining the country.

The disreputable system of bribery pervades all classes, and I do not exaggerate when I say that a Turk considers the opportunity, and never the morality of the action. There are a few honourable exceptions, remark I lay a stress on the word few, and these rather than admired for their probity, are ridiculed by their colleagues. I remember seeing at the Seraskierate in Constantinople, amongst many wealthy pachas, one poor-looking man who, after a

career of probity, was now stranded in his old age on the reefs of poverty. In reply to my exclamation of surprise at seeing a pauper pacha, the remark was, "He has had every opportunity of amassing as much wealth as others in his position, but he has not been clever enough to profit by it." Now, where roguery is characterised as talent, what can be hoped for? It will, on first reflection, be considered ungenerous on my part, or at least ill-timed, thus to stricture a struggling government, but when I have exposed the real position in which matters now stand, and the grave situation in which this portion of the Ottoman Empire has been plunged by the conduct of the authorities at Constantinople, all belonging to the clique I have condemned, I think I shall not merely be justified, but that the step I have taken will meet the approval of every true friend of Turkey.

The above, and other similar reflections, crossed through my mind as I passed under the crumbling gateway which leads to the upper part of the town of Kars. The streets and the bazaar through which I rode were in a frightful condition. Large mounds of frozen snow, and deep holes constituted the road, over which it was really dangerous to ride. Carcasses of horses and cattle were lying partly embedded in the snow in the open streets, and the dogs were as usual preying upon these offensive remains.

The extreme cold prevented the circulation of a

crowd in the narrow streets, otherwise the thousands of soldiers in the town would have rendered them impassable. Notwithstanding the rigour of the season, some five hundred soldiers were assembled in the market-place, and were busily engaged in bartering articles amongst themselves. Knives, gay-coloured handkerchiefs, spurs, and every imaginable article were changing hands, and warm stockings or old pairs of boots were greedily sought after. The poor soldiers were clad in the same slight clothing they had worn in the preceding summer, and very few were fortunate enough to possess great coats. The feet of most were swaddled in rags, and other contrivances that offered any resistance to the cold and damp. Those who were supplied with shoes or gaiters were in a vast minority. In the battle of Soobattan, which had decided the preceding campaign, the Ottoman troops before engaging had disembarrassed themselves of their great coats, which they had heaped together to the rear. When fortune went against them, a general *sauve-qui-peut* ensued, and the great coats were left as a most welcome spoil to the Russian soldiers. The appearance of the Turkish troops was heart-rending. Pale, emaciated, and half starved, they prowled about the butchers' shambles in search of food, or sought relief from the inhabitants, who were little less miserable than themselves. The place

was completely exhausted of fire-wood, and the sufferings of the soldiers were thus aggravated by the terrible rigour of the winter. The inhabitants of Kars had long since been deprived of their stocks of corn and provisions, on which their own subsistence during the winter months had depended. Their large herds of cattle and buffaloes were perishing of starvation in the stables, and the owners themselves were suffering from great want. Very few of the inhabitants pursued any industrial occupation. They subsisted on the produce of their large flocks and herds, which amply satisfied their simple wants. Two bazaars composed the commercial district of Kars. There any article could be purchased, from a Persian shawl, an Arab horse, or coat of steel armour, to an ounce of tobacco. Notwithstanding the want to which the troops were reduced, that remarkable patience and honesty which distinguishes the Turkish soldier, was not disowned for one moment. The merchants in the bazaar rarely complained of theft, notwithstanding that the stores of tobacco, coffee, and preserved fruits must have sorely tempted the starving and suffering troops. In the more retired streets of the town, poultry (on the eggs of which the inhabitants chiefly subsisted) wandered freely over the mud-built houses. Never, in the worst period of their trials, did the soldiers lay hands on that tempting

booty; and I seriously doubt if a more civilised army would have displayed equal respect for the property of their countrymen.

I passed on my way two cemeteries, both of which were covered with newly dug graves, and along the streets I encountered several coffins that were being conveyed to their resting-place. All these circumstances by no means tended to elevate my spirits, or to give me a vivid impression of the charms of an existence in Kars. I rode at once to the quarters of General Guyon; but he was absent on a survey of the Kara-dagh, a height which it was then proposed to fortify. An aide-de-camp accompanied me to the quarters of Major Bonfanti, who had been appointed military secretary to General Guyon. Owing to the prevailing confusion, no quarters had been as yet issued to the foreign officers who had lately arrived, and the house to which I was conducted contained no less than eight inhabitants, all more or less uncomfortable. These eight gentlemen all occupied one room, which was, in fact, the only habitable part of the house. For several days I constituted a ninth member of this happy family; but at length, through the kindness of General Guyon, I was put into the sole possession of a house, which, with a little outlay, I rendered habitable. But this establishment, as well as my household arrangements, I will describe in a future

chapter. From General Guyon, as well as General Kmeti, who had resided some time in England, I experienced the kindest reception, and I soon discovered, that, thanks to good fellowship, the existence at Kars, deplorable as it was, could yet be supported.

CHAPTER X.

GENERAL GUYON AND THE EUROPEAN OFFICERS.

No sooner had the political relations existing between the Sublime Porte and Russia assumed a threatening aspect, and the haughty mission of Prince Mentschikoff had sufficiently betrayed the real policy of the Czar, than the quiet streets of Pera at once swarmed with military adventurers, who crowded from all parts of the globe to take part in the approaching struggle. The motives which prompted this sudden enthusiasm for the cause of the Sultan, were no less multitudinous than the different nationalities of these applicants for military distinction. Hungarians, Americans, Italians, Poles, Germans, English and Frenchmen, one and all, pressed their respective claims upon the attention of the unfortunate Seraskier,* and demanded rank in the Ottoman service; not so much in proportion to their merits as to the degree of modesty they might possess. Thus an English-

* The Turkish minister of war.

man, enjoying an unenviable reputation, who had served, according to his own account, in every army of the world, was amongst the first arrivals at Constantinople. This individual who, on the same satisfactory authority, had commanded Mexican and Schleswig-Holstein armies, and gained innumerable pitched battles, that history—the slattern—had totally omitted to record, also laid claim to nothing less than the throne of England. A most conclusive genealogical tree was tantalisingly placed before the eyes of tight-fisted Armenian serafs,* whilst a sight of the “George” was offered to the delighted and discriminating gaze of the Frank shopkeepers of Pera. That the lawful claimant of the crown of England should have deigned to offer his sword and his military genius to the hard-pressed Sultan, was an act of condescension that I should have felt bound to record, even if the extraordinary modesty of the gentleman in question was not deserving of publicity. One fine morning the respective inhabitants of Stamboul, Galata, Pera, and Scutari were thrown into a fever of ecstasy and astonishment by learning that a great English warrior had arrived, and had kindly offered to the Sultan, in the most disinterested manner, utterly to annihilate the Russians on the following equitable terms:—The applicant, who was no other than the above “lawful claimant of the

* Bankers.

British throne," offered to produce that desirable result, on condition that he should be placed at the head of an army, totally independent of Omer Pacha and other generals, whose professional jealousy might have neutralised the efforts of his great genius, and that, amongst other equally reasonable stipulations, a monthly allowance of 100,000 piastres, or 800*l.* sterling, should be accorded to him. This proposition, owing to the baneful influence exercised by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, at the Seraskierate, was, however, immediately rejected.

It must not, however, be supposed that all the applicants who daily stormed the palace of the Seraskier were equally unreasonable in their expectations. There were a few modest souls who actually sacrificed themselves for a generalship of brigade, or even a full colonelcy. There were many, however, who had really seen active service, and who offered their swords to the Sultan from love of adventure, and with the laudable ambition of gaining military distinction. These were, however, in the minority.

At first the Seraskier of that day, Mehemet Ali Pacha, in perfect good faith believed in the wonderful testimonials freely produced by the applicants for service, and bestowed commissions to the right and left with a liberal hand. That disingenuous minister evidently considered that every European must neces-

sarily be possessed of undoubted military qualifications. It was only when the newly-created bimbashis and miralais applied for money to purchase their uniform, horses, arms, and to pay their travelling expenses to the seat of war, that the Seraskier became naturally alarmed, and desisted from his former indiscriminate liberality. Rizza Pacha, who succeeded Mehemet Ali Pacha, was still more averse to the employment of Europeans in the Ottoman service; and this disinclination on his part was certainly partly warranted by circumstances. The suicidal act of the Ottoman government in accepting, with so little circumspection, the services of the very first comer, naturally resulted in much mischief; for not only were many men utterly incompetent and worthless placed in the receipt of a pay which the state could ill afford, but officers of merit and social position, who subsequently offered their swords to the Porte, were refused employment. It is unnecessary for me to add, that many brilliant exceptions existed to this general rule. On the Danube the Polish officers one and all distinguished themselves; and the heroic exploits of Count Ilinski, better known as Iskender Bey, are familiar to the European public. Major O'Reilly, and several other European officers in the Ottoman service, equally displayed undoubted gallantry in the same field of operations. In Asia the conduct of the Poles was far from praiseworthy, nor

were the services rendered by the generality of the recently engaged foreign officers of any great value. That there are also many exceptions to the rule must be recorded ; and the military qualities possessed by the American majors, Tevis and Bonfanti, by the Polish Colonel Gotschimsinski, and by Baron Shwarzenberg, a Belgian officer, all of whom had seen active service, were undeniable.

The Turkish government commanded, however, an additional element, from which it extracted many valuable and experienced officers. I allude to the numerous Hungarians to whom the Porte had accorded an honourable refuge after the disastrous termination of the war of independence. Many distinguished officers of that nation offered their services to the Sultan without hesitation in the hour of need ; and if circumstances fatally prevented the accomplishment of their wishes, and the campaign I am now describing was not rewarded with the desired success, it is equally certain that the greatest bravery, the most undoubted military capacity, and an exemplary patience in the midst of continual disappointment, were one and all displayed by the Hungarian generals in Asia. Of these, General Guyon has certainly the most extended reputation. General Kmeti distinguished himself greatly in the Hungarian war as a gallant commander and an unambitious patriot. General Colman is justly considered one of

the most perfect military theorists living, and some of the finest movements executed in the Hungarian war were planned by his pen. These three generals, and several subaltern officers, represented the Hungarian nation in Asia. In order to avoid giving umbrage to the Austrian cabinet, their services were employed in this distant part of the Ottoman empire, in preference to Roumelia. General Guyon, though an Hungarian by adoption, is an Englishman by birth. At an early age he quitted his native land, and was placed in an Austrian military academy. From thence he entered the Austrian service, where, however, no opportunities for gaining distinction at that time presented themselves. Subsequently, Guyon served in Portugal. Returning to Vienna, he contracted a marriage with a noble Hungarian lady, whose father occupied a distinguished post at the court of the Emperor Ferdinand. Lieutenant Guyon, shortly after his marriage, quitted the Austrian service, and retired with his family to an estate possessed by his wife in Hungary. There he continued to reside in perfect tranquillity, pursuing the enviable existence of an Hungarian gentleman of former times. The chase, the cultivation of his estates, the introduction of modern agricultural improvements to his adopted country, and the display of true Hungarian hospitality, formed the pleasing occupation of his life. The threatening storm of

national dissatisfaction at length burst over Hungary, and the nation, lashed to fury at the treacherous policy of Austria, sprang to arms. District after district sent forth its population, capable of bearing arms, to fight for the threatened privileges of Hungary. The valour of the Honved battalions speedily shattered the military might and vaunted organisation of Austria. Amongst the earliest volunteers who took the field was Guyon, who, with the rank of captain, advanced with the army under Mezeros to the very walls of Vienna ; but the undisciplined force possessed by the Hungarians failed to render assistance to the insurgent Viennese, and was forced to retreat.

It is not my purpose to describe here the stirring and important events that, for a moment, threatened the very existence of the Austrian empire, nor to follow the varying fortunes of the Hungarian armies. The miracles of valour performed by the raw Hungarian levies, and the vigour and talent displayed by the young leaders of the movement are incontestable; and even those who may have considered the national aspirations of the Hungarian population as chimerical, or ill-advised, are forced to admit the patriotic self-abnegation and heroism displayed throughout the contest by the unhappy Magyars. The Hungarian forces had retreated to Debreczin before the overwhelming strength of Windischgrätz. Whilst

Europe was either rejoicing at the extinction of a revolutionary movement, or secretly deploring the supposed triumph of Austria, the Hungarian leaders were silently concluding those military preparations that eventually swept Jellachich and Windischgrätz from the soil of Hungary, that defeated Austrian army after army, and general after general, and finally failed through the intervention of Russia and treason. When the offensive movement against the whole Austrian line commenced, Guyon found himself at the head of a division attached to the main army, commanded by Georgy. His dashing courage had speedily attracted the attention of Kossuth, who had promoted him to the rank of general, and subsequently, with the authorisation of the Diet, presented him with a patent of nobility. At one time General Guyon had the command of the magnificent cavalry force, which formed the principal strength of the Hungarian army, and many were the brilliant charges executed by him at the head of those glorious huzzars. A misunderstanding broke out before long between Guyon and Georgy. From the commencement Guyon had detected in the character of the latter, the seeds of the selfish ambition and unquenchable pride, that in the end prompted him to betray his country and his own brilliant reputation. Guyon, with characteristic sincerity, had openly denounced Georgy as an incipient traitor and a

dangerous man. In consequence of the discord which reigned between the two generals, it was deemed advisable to employ Guyon on a separate enterprise, and the command of a small independent *corps-d'armée* was entrusted to him. Guyon speedily took the field and marched against the Ban Jella-chich, who was operating at the head of a superior force in the Banat. A series of strategic movements ensued, and a short but decisive campaign resulted in the complete defeat of the Ban. In this campaign occurred one of the most brilliant episodes in the whole war—the storming of the heights of Branitska. On this occasion Guyon succeeded in forcing a position which was pronounced utterly impregnable, and was deemed absolute madness to assail. This action consolidated the military reputation of Guyon. Fortune deserted the Hungarian cause after the magnificent opportunity of marching on Vienna had been treacherously neglected by Georgy. The Russian armed intervention followed, and with the surrender of Georgy, terminated the resistance of Hungary. Kossuth, who had previously displayed that republican tendency which encountered strong disapprobation on the part of Guyon and most of the superior Hungarian officers, succeeded in reaching Widdin in safety. The Hungarian forces speedily disbanded, and the leaders, whose heads were priced by the Austrian government, likewise sought safety

on the soil of Turkey. After many romantic adventures, Guyon, Kmeti, Bem, and others equally compromised, succeeded in escaping the vigilance of the Austrian troops that scoured the frontiers, and found the refuge they sought in the territories of the Turk. The generous courage of the Sultan in refusing to deliver up to the revenge of Austria the Hungarian and Polish exiles, forms one of the brightest traits of modern history; nor were the Hungarian generals backward in the hour of need of repaying their debt of gratitude to the Sultan, by the offer of their zealous and disinterested services. The generosity of the Sultan did not confine itself to the mere protection of the lives of the unfortunate exiles, who suddenly found themselves with confiscated estates thrown on the mercy of the world. Commissions in the Turkish service were bestowed on all the leading Hungarians and Poles, and residences affixed to them in the Asiatic provinces of the empire. Bem and Kmeti were despatched to Aleppo, and Guyon, with the title of Kourschid (Sun) Pacha, and the rank of general of division, proceeded to Damascus. In this delightful "city of gardens" he was rejoined by his family, who with considerable difficulty had succeeded in escaping from the Austrian empire. To the exertions of Rosa Shandor, a famed robber chief, who had commanded a partisan corps in the war, was the

Countess Guyon chiefly indebted for the success of her flight. In Damascus Guyon resumed the agricultural pursuits he had cultivated previous to the outbreak of the Hungarian war. A large *tschiffie*, or farm, offered him ample occupation, whilst the chase of the gazelle and occasional bloodless expeditions against the predatory tribes of the desert, afforded excitement and distraction. At the first commencement of hostilities, General Guyon petitioned the Sultan for active employment, and was unsuccessful. But no sooner had the incapacity and misconduct of the Ottoman commanders at Kars utterly demoralised the Turkish army, and that the very existence of Armenia was menaced by the then successful Russians, than urgent instructions were despatched from Constantinople to Guyon to proceed without delay to Erzeroum and Kars, and restore, if possible, the shattered discipline and *morale* of the Ottoman troops. General Guyon at once departed from Damascus, and after a journey, which, for its rapidity, the number of post-horses disabled therein, and for the amount and calibre of oaths pronounced by the proprietors of the hapless quadrupeds in question was unparalleled, he arrived at the head-quarters of the Turkish army in Kars. A series of energetic measures relieved the first necessities of the army, and kept together the starving and ill-treated soldiers, who, but for the auspicious

arrival of General Guyon, would have disbanded and returned to their homes. The presence of the general was at first hailed with satisfaction by the Turkish military authorities, who had despaired of the existence of their army; but gradually the national antipathy arose, and sentiments of jealousy prevailed over their judgment. The existence of Guyon was from that moment rendered one of torment. In his position as head of the staff, Guyon possessed no actual power, nor could he dispose of a single regiment. His duties were confined to advising the commanding general, Zarif Mustafa Pacha, and that intelligent officer had established as a general rule to disregard the counsels offered him by General Guyon, and to execute without hesitation the measures that were disapproved of by that officer. An erroneous opinion ruled in Europe to the effect that the command of the army of Anatolia was entirely in the hands of General Guyon; whilst, on the contrary, his power was utterly restricted to offering advice that was rarely accepted.

The personal appearance of General Guyon, as it first struck me, was prepossessing. His short, but muscular frame, betrayed great strength and activity. His face expressed resolution and courage, and was soldier-like, without bearing the aspect of semi-ferocity which our historical painters delight to bestow on the lineaments of their martial heroes. A clear

sunburnt complexion, lighted up by piercing blue eyes, and encircled by a curling chestnut-coloured beard, presented a strange contrast to the dark melancholic features of the Ottoman commanders who surrounded him. General Guyon was in the prime of manhood, being forty-two years of age; but premature wrinkles, drawn strongly across the forehead, bore witness to a past existence of fatigue and anxiety. A fine swordsman, a splendid and graceful rider, Guyon was intended by nature for a cavalry general; and if his talents as a commander are contested, none can deny his generous qualities or his brilliant courage. Guyon appeared insensible to fatigue. His habits at Kars astonished the calm indolent Turkish pachas, and not a little annoyed the officers immediately connected with him, who were totally unaccustomed to such activity. He rose at daybreak—mounted with his aide-de-camps—and either visited the fortifications that were being constructed around the town, or inspected the troops. At nine he breakfasted, to which meal the small Anglo-Saxon colony with the army had standing invitations. At eleven, Guyon again commenced his inspections, and his whole day thus passed on horseback. At sunset, he dined with the Muchir Zarif Mustafa Pacha, and then plans were daily formed that were never doomed to be realised. These meals generally commenced

with compliments, and concluded in violent recriminations. The evening was passed by Guyon at his quarters, in addressing communications or remonstrances to the Seraskier at Constantinople, on the deplorable condition of the army, that were destined to be totally unheeded. Later in the evening, his most familiar friends took their coffee or pipes with him, and talked over past times, or their distant homes.

The early hours of the morning Guyon passed in dictating letters and plans to his military secretary, Major Bonfanti; and never till one or two o'clock did he retire to rest, and then only to enjoy a few hours' repose.

The influence possessed by Guyon in the councils of the Turkish commanders ceased to exist shortly after the arrival at Kars of the Polish pachas, on whose conduct I have commented below. The native officers of rank, who viewed the presence of all foreigners with undisguised aversion, profited by the intriguing disposition evinced by the Poles to undermine the reputation of Guyon with the military authorities at Constantinople. They aimed at obtaining the removal of Guyon from his position as head of the staff, not, as was fondly imagined by the Poles, to nominate a successor from their ranks, but in order to absolve themselves entirely from foreign influence. In the eyes of the Turkish pachas,

Hungarians, Poles, Frenchmen, or Englishmen, were alike distasteful; and if they profited by the intriguing disposition of the Polish officers present with the army, it was not from the slightest personal sympathy with them or with their cause. Against these intrigues Guyon could offer but a faint resistance. His open and passionate temperament did not permit him to employ the same disgraceful means as his enemies, and he, consequently, found himself exposed to continual slights on the part of the Turkish pachas. With the troops Guyon was eminently popular. His affable manner and deep-felt sympathy with their sufferings, rendered him an object of affection to them, and loud were their praises in behalf of the Magyar Pacha,* as they called him. The subaltern officers, likewise, approved of Guyon's presence with the army, and only regretted that his power of counteracting the pernicious influence of the pachas was so limited. By the upper ranks of the army General Guyon was feared and detested. The Poles, likewise disliked him. Those who, like myself, had occasion to be constantly with Guyon, admired and liked him for his unassuming qualities, personal bravery, and amiable disposition. By many of the foreign officers, including the Poles, Guyon was denounced

* With the army and the peasantry Europeans were recognised by the general title of "Magyar."

as haughty and inconsiderate ; but then the extraordinary ignorance of the greater part of these officers was enough to try the temper of a saint. Perhaps General Guyon did not sufficiently disguise his aversion to those individuals who, though active and enterprising in intrigue, were backward and incapable in the performance of their military duties. He sinned less against common sense than against tact. The Hungarian officers, to their praise, took no part in the intrigues which disgraced the Europeans in Asia, and materially affected the prospects of the army. General Kmeti (Ismail Pacha), on witnessing the tendency of the Poles, sought and obtained the command of the bashi-bazooks, and by this means escaped their company. He succeeded in reducing these irregular savages to a species of order, and inspired them with the greatest confidence in his gallantry and ability. Kmeti was the most popular man in the army. Turks and Europeans alike admired and loved him. His handsome soldier-like face commanded respect, and the brilliancy of his courage, apart from his former splendid antecedents, rendered him the object of universal good will. In thus accepting the command of the irregulars, General Kmeti performed an act of self-abnegation rarely displayed by military commanders. In preference to drawing the Sultan's pay and passing his days in idleness, or, what was still more

reprehensible, in intrigue, Kmeti undertook to reduce the bashi-bazooks to utility—with what success we shall hereafter witness. Kmeti was indefatigable in the performance of the duties he had solicited. Although an infantry officer, and unaccustomed to hard riding, he now passed his days on horseback, scouring the frontiers at the head of his wild followers, and effectually guarding Kars from a *coup-de-main* on the part of the enemy. His nights he passed in some ruined village that had fallen victim to the horrors of war, often without a meal, and constantly exposed to capture or death at the hands of the Cossacks. General Kmeti had resided long in England, and spoke our language perfectly. His talents as a musician were alone surpassed by his qualities as a soldier ; and the only complaint I ever heard him express, amidst unusual hardships and disappointment, was the fact that no piano existed in this distant part of the globe.

General Colman (Fezzi Bey) was a popular officer, especially with the Turks, whose language he spoke to perfection.

General Stein (Ferhad Pacha), a German by birth and a renegade, passed but a few weeks with the army of Anatolia. The great military genius he possessed was unfortunately disfigured by hypocrisy, presumption, and a total absence of physical courage. In consequence of the general feeling of dislike that

animated the Europeans to the prejudice of this officer, he was shortly recalled to Constantinople. There Venus bestowed upon him that favour denied to him by Mars. He shortly espoused a Turkish widow, who conveyed to him great pecuniary resources and much political influence.

“Honneur aux intriguants.” I now arrive at the Polish element of the army of Asia. Before the outbreak of hostilities there resided at Constantinople a Pole of the name of Chyka, who performed the duties in that capital of political agent to Prince Czartoriski of Paris, the recognised head of the Polish constitutional party. This gentleman became a renegade, and adopted the title of Sadik Bey. He speedily obtained considerable influence with Reschid Pacha, and when the war broke out was named general of division with the rank of pacha. He was directed to raise a corps of cavalry, to be composed of Cossacks of the Danube favourable to the cause of Turkey. Partly owing to the fact that few Cossacks of that class could be discovered, recourse was had to the swarms of European ragamuffins that abounded in Constantinople, and the corps of Ottoman Cossacks was thus established. Sadik Pacha took the command of this body and marched to the Danube, where, however, fame has not yet enlightened us as to his achievements. Before, however, Sadik Pacha had quitted Stamboul a sudden

inspiration came over the Seraskier, who, one morning imagined that the presence of Polish officers on the Russian frontier, would have a wonderful effect in encouraging desertion amongst the Polish soldiers in the service of the enemy. This idea was skilfully encouraged by Sadik Pacha, who naturally wished to do his countrymen a good turn. He was thereupon desired by the Turkish government to request Prince Czartoriski to recommend to them two general officers, whose antecedents were such as to guarantee success to the contemplated measure. Some time elapsed, and then, to the great amusement of the Turks, the arrival was announced of four Polish officers, with the high sounding titles of Arslan (Lion) and Shahin (Eagle) Pachas, and of Tophan (Deluge) and Hilderim (Lightning) Beys. Some wicked wag at the Seraskierate had evidently amused himself at the expense of the new comers. I may here mention that the anticipated desertion of the Polish soldiers did not occur, and that, consequently, much money was wasted by the Turkish government in defraying the expenses of these Polish officers, whose presence in Anatolia was more a source of weakness than of strength. With the above mentioned commanders arrived several subaltern officers of the above nation.

Shahin Pacha, or General Brainski, was an excellent kind-hearted and honourable old officer, who

had seen good service. He had made the campaign of 1812 in Russia under Napoleon, and had a sound knowledge of his profession. He quitted the Sardinian army, in which he held the rank of colonel, at the desire of Prince Czartoriski and in obedience to sentiments of sincere patriotism. By that act he had forfeited the pension to which he was otherwise entitled for his services at Novara, where he was present in the capacity of aide-de-camp to that gallant, but unfortunate, monarch Charles Albert. The age of General Brainski, and a certain weakness of disposition, had, however, placed him under the complete moral dominion of his companion, and thus that excellent gentleman was rendered a party, and often an unwilling one, to the reprehensible machinations of General Bystronowski. The possessor of this euphonious name, otherwise Arslan, or the "Lion" Pacha, was the perfect incarnation of intrigue. A diminutive figure surmounted by a lively face, expressive, if not handsome, scarcely realised the ideas of a lion, nor did the shortsighted vision and round amiable face of Shahin Pacha encourage any resemblance to the eagle. In his younger days General Bystronowski had served in the Polish revolution under a relative, who, having raised a corps at his own expense, had bestowed a commission in the same on the incipient pacha. After the unsuccessful termination of the war,

General, or the then Captain, Bystronowski returned to Paris, and speedily obtained the good opinion of Prince Czartoriski. A great facility of expression, and undeniable diplomatic qualifications, recommended Captain Bystronowski to the attention of the prince, and in due time circumstances arose for the display of those peculiar gifts. The late Hungarian revolution had no sooner broke out, than the Polish chieftains in Paris determined on despatching to the head-quarters of the Hungarian army an envoy, who was directed to watch the progress of the contest, and to discover, if possible, the expediency of contracting an alliance with the Magyars, to be followed by a general rising in Poland. Captain Bystronowski was elected to be the diplomatic agent in question, and, accordingly, he set forth from Paris for the seat of war, where he arrived at the moment that fortune had deserted the patriots, and all hopes of a successful termination of the contest had been abandoned. In Hungary, Captain Bystronowski was not more successful than in Armenia, in cultivating the esteem or popularity of those who surrounded him. If no remarkable result attended this political mission, some slight personal benefit was however derived from it by the envoy. It had been considered unwise by the Polish politicians at Paris to dispatch an officer of subaltern rank on so highly important a mission,

consequently, Prince Czartoriski kindly conferred on Captain Bystronowski, previous to his departure, the rank of colonel. When the request of the Ottoman government reached Paris, it was decided by the prince to nominate his *protégé* as one of the required commanders, and Colonel Bystronowski, whose military antecedents I have detailed, landed in Asia as general of brigade and pacha.

The two Polish pachas were accompanied by two Polish miralais, or colonels. One of these officers had served in a subaltern rank in the Polish revolution of 1831, since which period he had resided in France. To his great surprise he was offered the rank of colonel in the Ottoman service. He readily accepted the offer made to him by General Bystronowski, and relinquished a situation he held in a French sugar refinery. The latter occupation, though doubtless respectable, can scarcely be considered as the best school for the development of military talents. His companion, Colonel Gotschiminski, was a most meritorious officer, very quiet and very phlegmatic; and why the Turks should have bestowed upon him the name of Tophan, or "Deluge Bey," I never could imagine. This contradictory appellation very naturally gave rise to numerous bad jokes in the camp, amongst which Metternich's famous exclamation, "Après moi le deluge," formed an inexhaustible starting point. Tophan Bey had early in life been

snatched from his family in Poland, in consequence of some trifling political offence, and banished to the Caucasus. There he was doomed to serve as a private soldier for many weary years, and by dint of the bravery he displayed in the numerous frays with the Circassians, was promoted step by step to the rank of major. He subsequently received permission to return to his home, and then, escaping to France, was offered the rank he now held.

Numerous subaltern Polish officers accompanied the two pachas. Some few of these, who had served as officers or non-commissioned officers in the Polish legion during the Hungarian war, were good soldiers. The greater number were, however, completely worthless. One of the latter class had displayed open cowardice in the Hungarian campaign. The hussar regiment to which he belonged was ordered to charge. The men received the command with acclamation and vivas. Not so our friend, who determined to be discreet, if not valorous. He was unable (being in the first line) to back out of his company, so that the only means of escape left to him was to gallop along the whole front of the regiment, and retire by the flank. This he actually performed. There was no Englishman connected with the army of Anatolia. A Canadian, Dr. Fraser, who was attached to the medical staff, alone represented Great Britain and the colonies. France was

not fortunate in her representatives. They consisted in an ex-officer of the National Guard, of a brave but drunken sous-officier of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, and of a talemji, or instructor, who was *en retraite* from the French army in consequence of some little *désagrément* with the military authorities of his country. Later in the campaign, two officers of the staff of the National Guard, with very pretty uniforms, arrived ; but were not of any great utility to the army. By a most remarkable coincidence, every one of these Parisians represented himself as being in direct communication with the Emperor Napoleon, who must in consequence have been particularly well informed of the progress of the campaign. If these representations encountered a cynical scepticism on the part of the Europeans, it must be admitted that by the Turks they were generally believed ; and the great interest taken in their proceedings by the Padisha of France was the subject of much congratulation.

Two Americans held commissions in the Anatolian army. Major Bonfanti, who had taken part in the Mexican campaign, and had served with the French foreign legion in Africa, was an active and intelligent officer. He was attached to General Guyon in the capacity of military secretary. Major Tevis had likewise served in Mexico, and had quitted the United States army in consequence of the irresistible

temptation presented by a campaign in the East. A man of property, he had declined receiving pay from the Ottoman government; and had solicited a command in the Bashi-bazooks, which was accorded to him. In the subsequent events of the campaign we shall often encounter this gallant officer, who adopted the brilliant and rich costume of the Syrian warrior—also his wild tastes and habits.

The whole of the above-mentioned officers formed the staff of which General Guyon was nominally the head. None of these held regimental commands in consequence of the Turkish law which prohibited a true believer being commanded by a Christian. The services they rendered in the capacity of staff-officers were very limited, and the Turks were sagacious enough to perceive their utter uselessness. Also, after the fatal termination of the campaign, they were one and all recalled to Constantinople. Had these officers been appointed to regiments, doubtless their presence would have been advantageous to the troops; but the "staff" was an unmitigated failure, without one single redeeming point. It entailed considerable expense to the Ottoman government, which the latter could but ill afford; and destroyed the prestige commanded by Europeans in the eyes of the silent but reflective Turk.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TURKISH PACHAS.

ON my arrival at Kars, the army, which was perhaps fifteen thousand strong, was commanded by no less than twenty-one generals, each with the rank and pay of pacha. These twenty-one pachas employed their time either in harassing the unfortunate Mustechar, or paymaster-general, for their hard-earned salaries, or in carrying on intrigues one against the other. Each of these officials possessed an agent at Stamboul, who haunted the palaces of the Seraskier and the Grand Vizier, and was charged with the mission of representing to those high authorities the peculiar qualifications possessed by his employer, and the unutterable stupidity that was the distinguishing quality of the said employer's rivals. The twenty-one pachas were one and all acquainted with each other's movements, and the delightful concord that reigned amongst them may be readily imagined. Whatever were the hostile feelings that raged in the individual breast of each

pacha, it must be admitted that in public nothing could surpass the cordiality of their interviews. The most charming compliments and the profoundest salutations were exchanged by these victims, but also accomplices of a bad and degrading system; and a stranger, if transported into the council chamber where these worthies calmly discussed the affairs of the army, would have imagined himself surrounded by a group of innocent single-minded patriarchs. The hatred of these pachas was concentrated on two objects—on the commander-in-chief, Zarif Mustafa Pacha, whose position they coveted, and on the foreign generals present with the army, whose superior intelligence they resented. To give the biography of each of the Turkish commanders would be neither a brief nor a pleasing task; but in order to illustrate the pernicious system which has accelerated the decline of the Ottoman empire, I will narrate a few episodes in the life of Zarif Mustafa Pacha, Muchir, or Field-Marshal of the Empire, and Commander-in-Chief of the Anatolian army. The biography of this pacha resembles that of most of his class, and he may be considered a fair specimen of his order, neither surpassing his brethren in good qualities nor in evil. Where Zarif Pacha first saw the light of day, history has omitted to record. He passed in early youth through that imperial road to success in Turkey—the slave-market.

Rizza Pacha, the present seraskier, became his master, and in the harem of that dignitary the future muchir developed those intellectual and moral faculties that shone forth subsequently in so pleasing a manner. The first bloom of youth had passed over the cheeks of little Zarif when he made his second step in the world, by appearing as chiboukgee, or pipe-bearer, in the train of his master. As the youthful Zarif increased in size and years, the desire of his owner that the state should profit by the services of his *protégé*, resulted in the gift of a civil appointment to Zarif Effendi, whose political and social career thus commenced. In similar cases it, however, generally occurs that the faithful chiboukgee, or aspiring barber, is rewarded with a captaincy or majority in the army, where, in good time, he obtains, either by intrigue or purchase, the rank of pacha. He then purchases in his turn little slaves, who may be considered as incipient generals and statesmen. It will not be a matter of much surprise perhaps, when this system of promotion is taken into consideration, that in Asia, as before Balaklava, officers of the Turkish army should have given the first example of flight to their unfortunate troops. Zarif Effendi prospered in the world, and speedily became Zarif Bey. In due time, thanks to the protection of his former master, he obtained an elevated position in the civil administration

of the army, when, however, a sudden mishap shattered his prospects for a time. Some accounts, relative to the clothing supplied to the army, having attracted attention, were closely examined, when it was discovered that by a dexterous financial operation, Zarif Bey had credited himself with 15,000 purses, or 75,000*l.*, that should have figured to his debit. This unfortunate circumstance resulted in the degradation of Zarif Bey from the post he occupied, and in his banishment. He was also ordered to refund the above-mentioned amount, and he actually did repay to government a small portion of that sum. The latter act of disinterested generosity, was a theme on which the personal adherents of Zarif Pacha, never ceased to declaim with admiration. The watchful eye of Rizza Pacha did not cease to protect the humbled Zarif, who ere many months had elapsed, returned from his semi-banishment, and re-entered the service of his country. Years passed by, and after having governed many smaller provinces of the empire, the Pachalick of Erzeroum was conferred on Zarif, now created pacha. As governor of that important province, Zarif Pacha remained until the year of grace 1854, when his former master, Rizza Pacha, succeeded to Mehemet Ali Pacha, as seraskier. Zarif was then appointed, by that discriminating official, muchir, or field-marshal of the army of Anatoly. I may mention

that the new commander had not the slightest acquaintance with military matters, and could not have manœuvred a corporal's ten men, and, therefore, much less a powerful army. In Turkey, that consideration, however, was of slight importance. Had it pleased Rizza Pacha to appoint his *protégé* finance minister, ambassador to London, or commander of the fleet, Zarif Pacha would not have hesitated one moment in undertaking the duties demanded of him. The new muchir speedily assumed his new functions, and joined the army of Kars. It must not be imagined that the nomination of Zarif Pacha excited very great enthusiasm amongst the troops he now commanded. On the contrary, the antecedents of the new muchir were decidedly against him, and the private soldiers and subalterns expressed their opinion, with respect to his qualifications for the command entrusted to him, with great sincerity of language. The muchir occupies too large a place in the sketches of the war, that I am now writing, that I need at this moment enter into any further details with respect to his career. We shall often encounter Zarif Pacha in the course of this history of the army he conducted to ruin. In person, Zarif Mustafa Pacha was neither distinguished by any peculiar grace nor defect; he was short in stature, with clumsy legs, and a stereotyped smile reigned everlastingly on his countenance. He

was amiable in character, and his disposition was merciful. This mercy, it must be admitted, though displayed to the offenders of the army, was scarcely extended to the financial interests of his sovereign. The conversation of Zarif Mustafa Pacha, according to the opinions of his countrymen, was distinguished by great elegance and purity of diction. The knowledge of foreign languages, possessed by the muchir, was limited to the French phrase, "*Comment vous portez-vous ?*" This polite enquiry, though its constant repetition never failed to excite the great admiration of the suite of the muchir, was apt, especially when expressed on every possible occasion and subject, to have a monotonous tendency. The second in command of the army of Anatoly, was Kerim Pacha, with the title of Reis. Kerim, an old officer, had distinguished himself against the Kurds and Arabs in the various risings of those unruly tribes. He possessed a certain amount of fire and energy when circumstances demanded the display of those qualities. The great age of Kerim Pacha, his venerable white beard and unpretending manners, endeared him to the troops, and he was one of the few native pachas in whom the soldiers placed their confidence.

Vely Pacha was a general of division, and headed the intrigues that succeeded in undermining the influence of General Guyon. Vely occupied the

same position amongst the Turkish officers as General Bystronowski with the Europeans. In intrigue both were magnificent.

The remaining pachas call for no especial notice.

Not one possessed military ability or moral worth. Whilst the army was starving they were accumulating their pay; and at times, when a small remittance was sent from Constantinople with a view of reducing the arrears due to the troops, those worthies, with wonderful unity of purpose, decided that their own claims for pay and for rations, that had not been supplied, must first be settled. This was done, and the arrears of pay due to the unhappy troops were allowed to accumulate beyond redemption. One Turkish official of high rank alone commanded the respect both of the Europeans and Turks. This was the Mustechar pacha, or the paymaster-general. This gentleman, who had been placed in his official position by the express command of the Sultan, with whom he was a great favourite, fulfilled the arduous and ungrateful duties of his office with wonderful command of temper and integrity. The post of paymaster was, the greater portion of the time, a complete sinecure, owing to the empty condition of the treasury. At the time I arrived, there were 500 piastres, or 4*l.* 10*s.*, in the public chest, which scarcely denoted a prosperous state of things. The supplies of money, and, subsequently, of bank

notes, despatched from Constantinople to this army, no sooner arrived than they were swallowed up in the payments made to the pachas and the superior officers. The poor Mustechar had, therefore, to contend hourly with dissatisfied claimants, who appealed not only to his official feelings, but, also, and rarely in vain, to his personal sympathy.

Amidst the continual torture of his official existence, the amiable Mustechar never once gave vent to anger, or to a harsh expression. With the private soldier, he was equally polite and considerate as with the muchir himself; and, as a natural consequence, he was equally beloved by Europeans and Turks. In person, the mustechar was handsome and dignified. His conversation was lively, and his mind peculiarly gifted. He was considered the most accomplished man in the empire by his countrymen, and his sovereign spoke of him as his best friend. Towards the Europeans, the Mustechar displayed unwearied kindness; and Colonel Thorne and myself were personally indebted to him for many proofs of good-will. In his official capacity, the Mustechar speedily attracted the enmity of Zarif Mustafa Pacha, in consequence of some financial operations attempted by the muchir, but disapproved of by him. In consequence of this ill-feeling, the Mustechar pacha, later in the campaign, solicited from his patron, the Sultan, his removal from the ungrateful honour that

had been conferred upon him ; and he quitted Kars, accompanied with the good-will of all, and amidst universal regret.

Over and above the twenty-one military commanders, whom I have already mentioned, there were present, at head-quarters, or at Erzeroum, a select body of civilian pachas, who were supposed to be connected, in some mysterious manner, with the administration of the army. Whenever any occurrence of an unfortunate nature, such as the stoppage of supplies for an entire week, took place, the military authorities were loud in their indignation at the neglect of the civil pachas ; and when military operations were either mismanaged, or resulted in disgrace, the voices of the latter officials rose loud and triumphantly against their military brethren. Both parties were, however, equally to blame. To augment his personal influence and wealth, was the sole thought of each individual, civilian or military, to whom the administration of the army had been entrusted.

The morals of the Ottoman military hierarchy improved towards its basis. The colonels were a sensible improvement on the pachas, and the taint of corruption gradually decreased with the social position held by the officers. The subaltern officers were in general well-disposed and active. The majors possessed a slight opportunity of committing

peculation, and were consequently less effective. The colonels were enabled by their position to rob a great deal, and were only surpassed in worthlessness by the pachas, who could defraud the government to a still greater extent.

The colonels, with a few exceptions, were generally young men, eagerly awaiting the moment, when, by intrigue or purchase, they would be promoted to the rank of pacha. One or two of the Arabistany colonels were, however, brave and energetic soldiers. The contrast of the regiments commanded by them with others less fortunate in their colonels, was astonishing. In the one, the soldiers who had confidence in their chief, displayed the military capacity really possessed by the Ottoman soldiers, whilst the other troops, slovenly and ill-disciplined, were alike a shame and an evil omen to the army. The superiority of the Arabistany regiments over the Anatolian ones was great, and resulted entirely from the merits of the officers in command. I may mention a colonel, Hussein Bey, a Circassian by birth, who commanded an Arab regiment, and who would have graced any European army. With a disregard for merit that is not however peculiar alone to Turkey, this officer was an object of jealousy and hatred to his superiors and equals; and whilst young and inexperienced men were created generals and pachas, no promotion ever rewarded his honest and praise-

worthy services. I have already given my opinion with respect to the private soldiers of the Ottoman army. In their present condition they are worthless, and totally unqualified to engage in the open field. By the introduction of a strict discipline, by an equitable system of promotion, and under the command of brave and honourable officers, the Turkish army could be raised to a point of excellency, second to no European force. The sobriety of the men, their simple wants, unfailing patience, and power of resisting fatigue, offer the most splendid materials for creating an irresistible infantry. The men are both intelligent and courageous. A commander, in whom they possessed confidence, they would follow without hesitation or regret. And this confidence is facile to obtain. A few kind words, a display of interest in his welfare, and honesty of purpose, suffice to gain the poor Turk's heart for ever. The Turkish artillery is excellent, even in its present state, but is susceptible of great improvement. In the management of this arm the Turkish soldiers show great aptitude, and the pride of the men in their batteries, and the affection they display for their respective guns, is admirable. At the subsequent battle of Kurekdere, when infantry and cavalry were in headlong flight, and the Russian dragoons were hewing down the forsaken gunners at their pieces, the latter stood steadily by their cannon, and

defended them to the last breath. The Turkish regular cavalry is utterly ridiculous, and is not in my conviction susceptible of amelioration. The idea of cavalry drawn up in line, and trained to charge and manœuvre in a body, can never be realised by the Turk, whose military antecedents condemn that system. The irregular cavalry is, on the contrary, excellent; but of this I shall have occasion to speak in another chapter. I have now introduced to the reader the principal personages, European and native, who figure in the drama I am about to describe; and if little or no surprise can be experienced at the fatal termination of the campaign, it is sincerely to be deplored that the reputation of an army, the lives of so many thousands, and the destinies of the Asiatic provinces of the Ottoman empire, should have been committed to hands so discreditable and inefficient.

CHAPTER XII.

MARCH OF EVENTS IN KARS.—THE RUSSIANS IN ASIA.

I HAVE already commented on the unprotected situation of Kars. The ancient castle was not in a condition to oppose the slightest resistance to an advancing enemy. The town was consequently liable at any time to be assaulted and captured by a rapid *coup-de-main* on the part of the Russians, concentrated in the fortress of Alexandropol. The depth of the snow in the wide extending plain, alone opposed the advance of the enemy; but we were now in the month of March, and a space only of six weeks separated us from the advent of spring. The sentiments of hope and delight with which the peaceful inhabitants of Europe were anticipating the approach of sunny May, and their consequent release from the dismal gloom of winter, were far from being partaken by the unfortunate army of Kars. The winter, terrible as were its ravages and trials, shielded the disorganised army from an attack, whilst spring, for which half the world were sighing, menaced us with defeat and ruin.

The absence of proper materials; and, especially, the sorrowful condition of the treasury, prevented the construction of any fortifications on an efficient scale; but the undefended condition of the town absolutely demanded that some species of defence should be raised, without any further loss of time. Kars, I have already stated, is commanded by a ridge of hills, the largest of which is known as the Kara-dagh, or the Black Mountain. The latter eminence entirely dominates the plain, by which the enemy would have to advance, in the event of an attack in force on Kars; but the town is liable to be turned by a rapid march over the hills, in which case, the position of the Kara-dagh, would offer little means of resistance. It was determined, however, to fortify this mountain in the best manner that the miserable resources possessed by the commanders would permit. There were no engineers with the army of Anatoly, no sappers, and very few intrenching tools. The latter were of the most ancient description, and consisted of useless picks, and a few score spades. A reconnaissance, directed by the muchir, Guyon, and the twenty-one pachas, with their pipe-bearers and grooms, ascended the Kara-dagh one day, early in March, and gravely surveyed that position. After a considerable discussion, in which many novel and original remarks were made, which would have afforded inconceivable

lelight to the ghost of Vauban, it was decided that General Guyon should be intrusted with the construction of the redoubts, with which it was very properly determined to crown the Kara-dagh.

General Guyon carefully surveyed that position, and proposed to erect eight redoubts, to be mounted with forty-six cannon. The difficulties in the construction of these works threatened to be great. The mountain was, in many places, five feet under the snow, and when that obstacle had been conquered, a second, and a more severe one, menaced the progress of the working parties. The Kara-dagh had been subjected to a volcanic convulsion, which had covered its surface with masses of rock and stones. Of earth, there was little, or none, and thus the construction of the redoubts, promised to be a matter of difficulty. Guyon, in the absence of proper engineering officers, intrusted the superintendence of the works, the lines of which he had traced out, to the European officers present with the army. Cavalry and infantry officers, more or less incapable, were, therefore, charged with the important mission of rendering Kars impregnable; and it may be easily imagined that some of the works constructed on the Kara-dagh were remarkably amusing. Bets were freely laid as to which would be the least efficient, but considerable difficulty was experienced in deciding that responsible question. The general

opinion of the camp pronounced itself against a little two gun battery erected at the foot of the Kara-dagh. Not only was this work concealed from, and consequently, unprotected by the redoubts that crowned the mountain, but its inevitable capture would have enabled the enemy to cannonade the town with impunity. These considerations were not, however, the only ones, for from the peculiar form of this work, its gunners would have offered an unerring mark to the enemy's skirmishers and riflemen.

The officers having been appointed to the superintendence of the working parties, the next task was to discover the men who could be employed in the latter occupation. The sickness and debility of the troops were such, that whole regiments were rendered inefficient, and the most fortunate battalions of the army were reduced by famine and typhus to a third of their proper strength. It may be calculated that the loss of life in the two last months of winter, suffered by the army of Kars, not twenty thousand strong, exceeded four thousand men. It was, consequently, a matter of much difficulty to ascertain the regiments that had suffered the least, and were the best able to resist the cold and fatigue attendant upon intrenching duties. The colonels and majors were not in the least inclined to pass their days on the freezing

summit of the Kara-dagh, so that it was next to impossible to collect together an efficient body of workmen. At length, it was determined, that each regiment should take its turn, and thus a daily force of two thousand men proceeded to the fortifications. The inhabitants of Kars had taken an immense interest in these preliminary proceedings. Their native place was now to be adorned with *tabias* as they styled the redoubts, and although they did not perfectly comprehend what the *tabias* in question were to resemble, or were to effect, that consideration had only tended to increase their excitement and curiosity. On the day that the operations were to commence, great crowds of serious fathers of families had assembled in the coffee-houses, in the bazaars, and in the market-place of Kars, and were discussing the question of fortifications with much interest. Suddenly, a band of cavasses, backed by a company of infantry, made their appearance, and surrounded the astonished inhabitants.

An order from the Muchir was then read aloud, in which all the inhabitants of Kars were commanded to proceed at once to the Kara-dagh, to assist in erecting the defences of their town. Nothing could exceed the disgust of the assembled multitude, on hearing this decree, unless, perhaps, it was the delight of the soldiers, who considered

the whole affair in the light of a very good joke. The inhabitants one and all murmured, and a few energetic leaders refused point blank to work at tabias, or at anything else. They were at once seized by the cavasses, and well thrashed, after which wholesome lesson, they proceeded with their more discreet companions towards the black mountain. Every now and then a dead stop would be made, and the whole body proceeded to argue the question with the cavasses, who proved themselves deaf to the combined influence of logic and eloquence, and who threatened to repeat the above unpleasant operation, unless the inhabitants continued on their distasteful march. This menace had the desired effect, and the good people started off like a large flock of very discontented sheep. The summit of the Kara-dagh was a good forty minutes' walk from the town, and the ascent was steep and difficult. The soldiers marched up, preceded by their bands, and notwithstanding their pale, sickly forms, they displayed a sturdy resolution in forcing their way through the snow, and in labouring on the heights. The first day, everybody who was in good health, visited the Kara-dagh. The Muchir and the native pachas were there, as likewise Guyon, and the foreign generals. The Muchir, in order to set a good example to the troops, took up a spade, and commenced digging; but after a little time he sat

himself calmly down upon a stone, and called for a pipe and coffee. The servants of the commander-in-chief had constructed a little kitchen, where the latter indispensable beverage was prepared. The other pachas likewise took up stones, or dug holes, to the great edification of the troops, and then, also, called for their pipes. Then commenced the real labour of the day. The soldiers were dispatched to collect the largest stones that covered the surface of the mountain, though concealed by the snow, and were directed to throw them along the lines that had been traced out for the redoubts. In time, the faces of the works were knocked up, and then, as evening was approaching, the whole living mass assembled on the Kara-dagh, broke up, and descended to the town.

The next day, all the fathers of families who had taken at first such very great interest in the fortifications, carefully remained within doors and hermetically closed the entrance to their dwellings. Another body of soldiers proceeded to the heights, and the works visibly progressed. The exposure to the open air and the vigorous exercise they took soon had a favourable result on the spirits and health of the troops, who proceeded to the Kara-dagh with great satisfaction. The parapets of the redoubts had ere long attained their proper height and breadth, and it now became necessary to collect earth in sufficient

quantities to face them. This was pronounced impossible in the present state of the weather, so it was determined to await the thaw to complete these works, and in the meantime to throw up fresh stone redoubts. The Muchir was very often present on the Kara-dagh, and encouraged the men to work, by awarding to the most active of them small pecuniary rewards. To men who conveyed unusually large stones he gave a few piastres, which, owing to the hardness of the times, was a little capital to the fortunate recipients. The strength possessed by the soldiers, notwithstanding their life of misery, was wonderful to behold, and could only be believed by those who have witnessed the astonishing burthens transported by the Armenian hamals, or porters, of Constantinople. Some of the Arabistany soldiers were peculiarly powerful. They staggered under the weight of rocks that would have crushed an ordinary mortal. The middle of the day was apportioned by the soldiers to repose. Some of them slept. The few who had money to purchase tobacco lighted their chibouks, and the remainder contrived to pass away the time in amusement. At this period of the day the aspect of the Kara-dagh was most lively. Bands of music threw animation into the men by their martial strains. The neighing and prancing of the officers' horses, and the motley garments of the citizens who had fallen into

the hands of the cavasses, gave to the whole scene a sprightly and agreeable colouring.

No man possessed the gift, so necessary to the successful commander, of gaining his men's hearts and confidence as General Guyon. At his approach the men used to grin with pleasure, and he had a joke and a kind word for all. The hours of relief they often passed in performing their national games, under the presidency of that General. He would seat himself with a very grave face on a stone, the soldiers forming a semicircle around him; whilst in the centre a couple of men displayed their address with the sword. A man, more learned than the others, would then repeat some sentiment or improvise a song, whilst all the men caught up the last phrase and made the hills resound with the echo. The Arabistany troops were famous for this, and entered fully into the fun of the thing. They accompanied the voice with their hands, which they beat in unison or to the sound of a vile fife and drum, which seemed dedicated to that service. Although the verses composed on the occasion were no "great shakes," either as regards the metre or the ideas, and would have disgusted a crack macaroni-fed Neapolitan improvisatore, yet they had the desired effect of pleasing the troops, who returned with fresh vigour to their work. In the evening the soldiers returned singing and laughing

to their quarters, and nobody would have guessed the misery supported with such resignation and courage by these poor fellows.

I have already mentioned the presence at Kars of Haïreddin Pacha, the imperial commissioner to the armies of Asia. That excellent official took his departure towards the latter end of March, and proceeded to Batoum to inspect the *corps d'armée* commanded at that point by Selim Pacha. Haïreddin Pacha was much regretted by the Europeans and by the soldiers, whose position had sensibly improved under his vigilant eye. The intrigues of the Poles, and the hostility of Zarif Mustafa Pacha, the Muchir, to General Guyon, shortly commenced after the departure of Haïreddin Pacha. The representations made by the latter to the Seraskier, on his return to Constantinople, were not without result, and cannon, ammunition, clothing, and money were dispatched to the relief of the long-forsaken army of Kars. Some months elapsed before these much-needed succours arrived; and, in the meanwhile, the soldiers struggled manfully against their hard fate. The absence of roads delayed the arrival of provisions, and pack-horses and mules likewise failed. Every cannon-ball or ounce of gunpowder that was fired by the army of Kars, was received from Constantinople. To such a state of helplessness had the ignorance and cupidity of the pachas

reduced the Asiatic provinces of Turkey. The articles required by the Asiatic armies were dispatched from Stamboul to Trebizond by steamers, and from thence were forwarded to the respective head-quarters, on pack-horses, or mules. The number of the latter were naturally limited, and the irregular payment of the remuneration, accorded to their owners by Government, prevented fresh proprietors from entering into engagements. Had either foresight, or patriotism, been displayed by the past Government of Turkey, vast stores of ammunition would have been stowed away at Erzeroum; where, likewise, foundries would have been created. This might have been effected before the commencement of hostilities, and during the many years of peace that followed the first occupation of Armenia by Prince Paskievitch. The disasters sustained by the Turkish army, in the campaign of 1829, had clearly displayed to the Ottoman Government its weak points, but no measures had been adopted, either to eradicate, or to modify them. An intrenched camp should have been constructed at Kars, affording sufficient protection to a numerous army. Thus Erzeroum and the interior of Armenia would no longer be menaced by the Russian army of the Caucasus. The absence of prudence displayed by the Government at Stamboul, was worthily imitated in Kars. Spies, for a time, were allowed freely

to traverse the frontiers, and it was only through the energetic protests made by the European generals, that active measures were adopted by the Muchir to detect and punish the offenders. In the meanwhile, the Russian agents had become emboldened, and openly wandered about the town to collect information.

The sergeant on guard of the parks of artillery lying outside the town perceived one evening an individual counting the guns in a very suspicious manner. The man was arrested, and, on being interrogated, confessed that he was a spy, and that he had been instructed to report to the enemy the number of cannon and the names of the European officers in Kars. His account implicated a wealthy Greek merchant named Stephano Therzopolu, who was at once arrested. Subsequently several others were placed in confinement. There were no written proofs of the guilt of these individuals, but it was ascertained that Therzopolu had been some short time before at Gumri, the Russian fortress near the frontier, and the evidence of the man first arrested was most conclusive. Several others, and some in high authority, were suspected and carefully watched. In consequence of this discovery, it was very properly proposed that martial law should be proclaimed in Kars and the surrounding districts. This step was most necessary, owing to the proximity of the

Russian frontier, and to the numerous Greeks and Armenians established at Kars, who were all Russian at heart.

The examination of the above spies resulted in the banishment of the Greek merchant to Sivas, and the punishment of the minor offenders.

In consequence of the mistrust inspired by the detection of this treasonable correspondence with the enemy, rewards were offered to those soldiers who should be fortunate enough to capture any transgressor. The result was, that every day some officious private soldier would arrest the first strange looking face he might encounter, on the speculation that the individual might perhaps turn out to be a spy. To such a pitch did this inconvenience attain, that the measure referring to the above reward was abandoned.

I was one day on the Kara-dagh, conversing with General Guyon, when a sturdy little fellow was dragged forward, much against his will. He had been captured within the lines, and certainly his sharp, inquisitive-looking face was enough to have at once condemned him to the gallows as a spy. He was armed with a knife and a long, dangerous-looking Circassian pistol, which, as a precautionary measure, was confiscated. The pistol proved, on trial, less dangerous than its great length and bulk had promised, for all efforts to discharge it were in

vain, as the tough, rusty old trigger defied the power of human fingers. The suspected spy was hauled off to prison in the most unceremonious manner by two large Arabistany men, who, by the delicate attentions they paid their charge, seemed to fancy instantaneous impalement too merciful a punishment for him. I was curious to know the result of the fellow's examination, and the justification he would offer. He was, however, too much alarmed to reply, and was remanded to the morrow.

On the following day, however, this suspected spy was re-examined, and it was proved that he was far from being such. He had been sent upon the mountain to work, but preferring to skulk about rather than labour, he had attracted the notice of his capturers.

Everybody had anticipated the disclosure of some atrocious scheme, of which the prisoner was the agent, and his death by the cord was pronounced as infallible.

Whilst matters were at their worst stage in Kars, and sickness and famine were daily demanding their victims, intelligence was received from Bayazid—a town on the Turco-Persian frontiers—to the effect that Persia was making vast military preparations, evidently with the view of overrunning the Turkish territory. Fortunately this information was not borne out by facts, but it had the effect of creating a

great deal of temporary alarm in the minds of the heads of the army. It was now the commencement of April, but we were still in the depth of winter, and snow-storms daily increased the depth of snow in the plains. The communication from whence provisions might have been procured thus continued closed.

Typhus had declined in its ravages, but the troops suffered greatly from dysentery and exhaustion, caused by insufficient nourishment. The stocks of rice had been long since exhausted, and the Arabistany regiments, who loathed meat, lived simply on bread and water. Yet these poor fellows were the flower of the army, and if a smile was seen in Kars—I confess the occurrence had now become rare—be assured it beamed on the face of an Arab.

In the previous pages I have attempted to describe the condition of the Turkish army of Anatoly towards the close of the winter months. The advent of spring necessarily witnessed the arrival of large reinforcements which completely changed the aspect of matters. With the snow disappeared the greater part of the misery heaped upon the army of Kars. The forces possessed by Russia in the neighbouring province of Georgia were not sufficient to warrant an advance into Armenia, otherwise the army stationed at Kars would have been greatly imperilled. The same auspicious change of season that brought succours to the Turks likewise increased the strength

to the Russian army of the Caucasus. The condition of the Russian army stationed at Gumri on the frontiers was hardly preferable to that of the Kar army. Typhus decimated the regiments, and provisions, though not so scarce as in the Turkish town, were far from being in abundance.

The Trans-Caucasian provinces of Russia offer the most remarkable evidence of the insatiable thirst for dominion that is the characteristic of Russian policy. This portion of the Russian empire can alone be compared to a vast receiving-house of stolen goods. In the instance of Erivan, that fertile province was taken from Persia. The province of Akhalsik was snatched from the Turks, as likewise that of Gumri. The petty chieftains of Imeritia, Abasia, Mingrelia, and Gouriel fared no better than the ruler of Georgia. With steady perseverance, Russia has successfully absorbed the above provinces, the inhabitants of which now enjoy her very enlightened and humane rule. With eyes directed on Armenia and Tabriz, on one side, and on the other on India, the government of St. Petersburg awaits the day when fortune shall smile more favourably on its aggressive instincts. As the first stepping-stone to India, the Caucasian provinces were conquered, and, notwithstanding excessive drains upon the imperial treasury and the sacrifice of innumerable lives, Russia has consolidated her power in the East, and from her position in

Georgia constantly menaces her trembling neighbours, Persia and the Porte. It is not in the least **my** intention to enter into a long dissertation on the chances of success possessed by Russia in gaining her ambitious designs. That problem will, probably, be solved in the course of the war in which we are at present engaged, and cannot fail so to be, if the English government is alive to its real interests and duties. I wish merely to allude to the military position of Russia inasmuch as it affected the campaign which I am now describing.

At the commencement of the war Russia was in possession of a strong line of forts which flanked the Black Sea, and kept in check the wild population of Abasia, Mingrelia, and Imeritia. Owing to the absence of sufficient troops on the Georgian frontiers, the greater number of those forts were evacuated and destroyed by their garrisons, who subsequently reinforced the Russian army at Gumri. Anapa and Soujoukalé alone were maintained in existence, and, until the 5th of June of the present year, remained in the hands of the Russians. By the voluntary destruction of the above line of forts the Russians renounced the labour of years. On the Caspian Sea, where their rule is constantly menaced by the unconquerable Daghas-tanese, the Russians possess another line of forts, of which the principal one is Derbent. They likewise

are stated to have a small fleet of gun-boats on the Caspian Sea, and also two or three war-steamers. At the time I arrived in Kars the following was the disposition of the Russian forces in Georgia, and along the shore of the Caspian Sea. The number of the fortified positions occupied by the enemy will be remarked; but I must here observe that those forts, though capable of offering a successful resistance to the badly armed mountaineers, would speedily fall before a regular army. It has, however, not been an unusual event for those positions to be stormed by a rapid *coup de main* on the part of the followers of Schamyl, and the small park of artillery, possessed by that chieftain, is formed from ordnance captured in these expeditions.

The regiments distributed along the Caspian Sea, and over Georgia, are constantly changed, but the strength of the garrisons is never reduced.

On, or in the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea, were stationed the following regiments. They were quartered about the various forts, whose names I have given, and in which were established the staffs of the regiments:—

1. The regiment of Chasseurs (Kurinski jegierski) at Grozna, a temporary fort, situated in a plain, washed by the river Sountcha.

2. The regiment of Chasseurs (Kabarda) at Nizapni, a stone fort, two days' march from Grozna

and built on a mountain, at the foot of which runs the river Andreievská.

3. The regiment of the line (Apcharonski) at **Temerhaulhouré**, a mud fort, two days' march from **Nizapni**, built in a plain.

4. The regiment of the line (Samorski) stationed between the Caspian Sea and Daghistán, at **Kazikoumik**, a ruined fort above the fortress of **Derbent**; distant, five days' march from **Temerhaulhouré**.

5. In the province of **Ahtimistindjee**, often rebellious, is the regiment of the Count **Grafski**, stationed at **Kouba**, a temporary fort; distance, forty versts from the Caspian Sea, and three days' march from **Kazikoumik**.

6. The regiment of **Chasseurs de Tiflis**, stationed between the fortress of **Zakasale**, and the province of **Kahetie**, at **Harahatche**;—not fortified—eight days' march from **Kouba**, and two from **Tiflis**.

7. The regiment of **Georgian Grenadiers**, between **Tiflis** and **Akhiska**, at **Gory**; a dismantled stone fort, two days' distant from **Tiflis** and three from **Akhiska**.

8. The regiment of **Erivan**, between **Tiflis** and **Ahalkale**, at **Manglis**; a day and a half's march from **Tiflis**.

9. A regiment of **Dragoons** (**Nijni Novogorod**) covered the districts between the **Terek** and the third fort of **Tamerhaulhouré**.

Regiments of the Don Cossacks were employed in watching the Persian and Turkish frontiers.

The militia was not organised, but in time of war the principal chiefs furnish armed men, whom the Russian Government take in pay. I give the following as examples. The Prince Andronikoff had furnished a thousand horse; the Prince Orbélianoff the same number; Ahmed Mehinlinski 2,000 horse; Kouminski Bey 1,000 horse; the Alahdan of the Kazi-koumiks 3,000 horse, &c. &c. Besides the above regiments there were sixteen battalions of veterans spread over the whole country either in small forts or in towns. The most important rivers of the Caucasus are the Arax and the Koura. The Arax, whose source is above the village of Kiuprikioj, passes Erivan and other important places, and forms the Persian boundary, receives the river Koura, and falls into the Caspian Sea. Its course is rapid, and its breadth some 150 feet. Throughout its length the Arax is fordable.

The Koura springs from beyond the lakes of Topavarans, or Pervanaguel, in the Turkish territory,—flows near Akhiska, and uniting with the river Ardahan, passes the monastery of Isheta, where there is a stone bridge. The Koura flows by Tiflis where there are two wooden bridges, and then unites with the Arax. The Koura is deeper than the Arax,

and of the same breadth. The points by which an army could invade Georgia are the following:— From Akiska to Tiflis, by Gori, the road is difficult; from Souram, by Gori to Tiflis, a three days' march, and the road is good. The road from Ahalkale to Pervanaguel, where there is a colony of "true believers," hostile to Russia, is three days' march along a good road, to Tiflis. The road from Gumri to Tiflis is excellent; that through Erivan, through Pambe, where the Dragoons were then quartered, to Tiflis, is good, and is within a six days' march.

There were, at that period, about 16,000 Russians in Gumri (Alexandropol). During the winter months these troops had been dispersed over the neighbouring villages, but they had lately been recalled to Gumri. The fortress of Gumri is perhaps one of the strongest in Russia. Since the last war with Turkey, when that part of the Ottoman territory was annexed to the Muscovite empire, the Russians have been most active in endeavouring to render the place impregnable, and all the experience of modern science has been called into requisition to assist the natural strength of the position. The town of Gumri has improved since its change of masters, as far as external display counts, and the houses are built with regularity and in European style. The moral character of its inhabitants has deteriorated in

the same ratio—indeed it would seem from experience, that wherever Russian arms or policy are successful there also start up corruption and immorality. The river Arpatschai flows through two rugged mountains, and thus forms the boundary of the two empires. On the Russian side is constructed the fortress of Gumri. The mountain, if it can be so called, rises abruptly above the river, and the summit presents a plain. In this plain have been dug the walls of the fort. They are of great extent, and the masonry is most solid. The walls are arched, and a casemated gallery connects the whole place. In this manner, the cannon can not only be pointed at an advancing enemy, but can also be turned on the interior, should he have succeeded in penetrating its precincts. Altogether, there must be in Gumri 150 mounted cannon, whilst in unmounted pieces, balls, ammunition, &c., the place is well stocked.

Inside the fortifications are barracks, hospitals, and a handsome church, the spire of which can be seen from the heights near Kars. The fortress is flanked and strengthened by two minor forts, termed the black and the red towers. The red tower, a species of martello, was mounted by six cannon, of which four were contained in the body, and two fixed on the roof. The black tower is employed as a prison, and from its walls are despatched annual squads to Siberia. The last time my informant was

at Gumri, there were two superior officers and a general in this tower, expiating a theft on government. The body of the tower, which is circular on the Turkish side, and extends to a demilune on the Russian, is wholly occupied by the prisoners, consequently the cannon, six in number, are planted on the roof. The gunners are unprotected, except by a small parapet, the height of the knee, and offer an easy mark to the rifle.

It had been ascertained that typhus greatly ravaged the garrison until the troops had been dispersed over the surrounding villages. General Prince Bebutoff, an Armenian by birth, commanded at Gumri.

The wood employed in the construction of this fortress was entirely procured from the Turkish territory. In the province of Gumri, as in the Pachalick of Kars, not a single tree is to be found, and all the wood consumed at Kars, as also at Erzeroum, is procured from an extensive pine forest situated in a mountainous region that intersects the latter two towns. From this forest, by the connivance of a former governor of Kars, was procured the wood which enabled the Russians to construct their almost impregnable position at Alexandropol. The latter is the name given by the Russians to the town and fortress of Gumri. Alexandropol commands the road to Tiflis, and threatens the Asiatic

provinces of the Porte. Then, in the direction of the Black Sea, in the province of Akhiska, the Russians occupied another strong position. This was the town of Akhiska, which was defended by some recently constructed works. The right wing of the enemy was posted at this point, and was faced by the left wing of the Turks, consisting, at the time, of a few battalions that were stationed at Ardahan, an unfortified position. The Russian centre was at Gumri, and was opposed by the Turkish centre at Kars. The left wing of the enemy was at Erivan, and was faced by the Turkish right, stationed at Bayazid, a town that lies at the foot of Mount Ararat, on the Russian, Turkish, and Persian frontiers. The Ottoman force at Bayazid consisted of a few feeble battalions; and, owing to the depth of the snow, very few reinforcements could be despatched in that direction from Kars. Two battalions that were sent to that point from Kars, in the month of March, succumbed on the road from cold, and very few of the poor troops that composed the expedition arrived at their destination. Another Russian army, with its head-quarters posted at Urzughetti, and subsequently at Kutois, opposed the advance of the Turkish army at Batoum. In order to describe the exact position of the antagonists in Asia, I have drawn up a table illustrating the positions of the Russians and the Turks. This will,

perhaps, render the comprehension of the succeeding events a more easy task.

RUSSIANS.

Head Quarters.	Reserves.	Strength.	Commanders.
Gumri, or Alexandropol	Tiflis	15,000	Gen. Prince Bebutoff.
Akhiska	—	4,000	—
Erivan	—	3,000	Gen. Wrangel
Urzughetti	Kutois....	8,000	Gen. Pr. Andranikoff.

Opposed by—

TURKS.

Head Quarters.	Reserves.	Strength.	Commanders.
Kars.....	Erzeroum	20,000	Zarif Mustafa Pacha.
Ardahan	—	2,000	Osman Pacha.
Bayazid	—	2,000	Selim Pacha.
Batoum	—	13,000	Selim Pacha.

The above were the respective positions of the two rival forces in the month of April. Subsequently the different *corps d'armée* were reinforced to a great extent, as we shall see hereafter. The reserves of the army, commanded by Prince Bebutoff, were stationed at Tiflis, and they supported likewise the forces engaged in watching the movements of Schamyl. At the period I am writing of, the

severity of the winter had interrupted the communications between the Daghestan chieftain and the commanders of the Turkish army at Kars. Four emissaries despatched from Kars failed to reach their destination, and fell into the hands of the enemy. It was subsequently endeavoured to combine an offensive movement with Schamyl, but circumstances did not allow of its execution. Schamyl represented his total impuissance to undertake an advance into the plains at the head of any considerable strength. At the risk of destroying many romantic notions in the minds of my readers, I must plainly state that the indisciplined and badly armed rabble that comprises the followers of Schamyl, though invincible in their mountain fastnesses, are utterly harmless in the plains of Georgia. Nothing can be more absurd than to read the periodical victories recorded by the imaginative writers in the German papers, in which, as an example, 60,000 Circassians are represented as being within two days' march of Tiflis. The truth is this. When the fields have been sown, the mountaineers have leisure, until the harvest-time approaches, to undertake a little foray, and a few hundred horsemen will assemble, and, descending from their mountain retreats, fall like a thunderbolt on some unsuspecting Russian village. The place is sacked, the inhabitants murdered in cold blood, or carried off as slaves, and the *intrepid* followers of

Schamyl, loading their horses with the booty, beat a hasty retreat. It would be an impossibility for that chief to assemble and keep together any considerable force for a longer period than a week. If it were even in the power of Schamyl to provide food for his undisciplined force, his followers would, nevertheless, disperse, for it is for plunder, and plunder alone, that the Circassian, Lesghien, or Daghestanese quits his mountain village. A single Russian dragoon regiment, backed by a troop of horse artillery, would suffice to rout any force that Schamyl could bring into the plains of Tiflis. Nobody is better aware of this than that chieftain himself, and he has displayed consummate wisdom in never having committed himself in any similar expedition. In their own inaccessible mountains and wooded heights, the Circassians and Daghestanese are beyond danger ; but as a serious menace to Russian rule in the Trans-Caucasian provinces, they are not entitled to the credit and importance that has been bestowed on them in Europe.

CHAPTER XIII.

LIFE IN KARS.

I HAVE already mentioned that a dwelling-house had been placed at my disposal by the Governor of Kars, and to the kind interest of General Guyon was I chiefly indebted for the comparatively comfortable quarters that had been granted me, and which I will now attempt to describe. My house, or, as the Turks termed it, my konak, was beyond the boundary of the town, and enjoyed, therefore, a less unhealthy atmosphere. From the windows I possessed a fine view of the ruined castle, which rose above me, also an extensive panorama of the Karadagh, the plain of Kars, and the distant mountains of Georgia. Around me were streets of low-built, mud-roofed houses, over which towered my residence, though not in solitary splendour. I had two rivals in magnificence. A mollah, or priest, who functioned at a neighbouring wooden mosque, and an old Persian banker, who occupied a large stone mansion with a small court-yard. The house that had been allotted to me could compete, in point of external

beauty, with either of those inhabited by my two rivals, but it was in the interior arrangements that mine bore away the palm, as the mollah himself generously confessed. To Oriental splendour I had united the advantage of European civilisation, and the result was most startling, as will be perceived. But I am anticipating events. My house was immediately faced by a small, uninhabited wooden building. This I, in the course of the winter, purchased, and employed the timber, of which it was chiefly constructed, as fire-wood. This investment cost me the sum of three hundred piastres, or about fifty shillings of our money, which satisfactorily proves that house property is not of so much value in Kars as in London. Beyond this wooden building was a large open space, where the government caravans were in the habit of unloading. As the season advanced, long strings of splendid camels daily arrived here from Bayazid, laden with rice for the troops. I had thus an excellent opportunity of studying the genus camel, and after mature reflection I am of opinion that while no animal can compete with it in point of utility, so none can surpass it in obstinacy and ill-temper. The camels in question were magnificent creatures, of immense height and strength. They were generally vicious to a degree, and fights between themselves, or assaults on their drivers, were matters of daily occurrence.

Beyond this open space, were government store-houses, and, to the back of the latter, a large cemetery. This was truly a disheartening aspect. The narrow graveyard was filled to repletion with the remains of the unfortunate victims of typhus or starvation; and, the number of new graves that were daily dug, was fearful to behold. In advance of the cemetery was another open piece of ground, which ran along the walls of the town. This space, at the time I arrived, was one mass of ice. Later, it became a deep, muddy lake, the abode of wild fowl and frogs; and, as summer advanced, it was transformed into a pleasant meadow, where the raw cavalry regiments were, at times, drilled and reviewed. My house was a large, square building, constructed of enormous stones, and, if it was destitute of architectural beauty, it had the advantage of being very massive. The entrance was by a large, wooden door, that could have resisted the shock of an ancient battering-ram, so prodigious was its strength. My servants would have preferred it to have been less strong, for it was a serious undertaking to pull it open. The ground-floor consisted of an excellent stable for six horses, another one for four, and an extensive place for buffaloes and cattle. On this floor were the servants' quarters, consisting of two sitting-rooms, which depended for light principally on that afforded by the chimneys; and also a

kitchen. As my domestic arrangements were not on so extensive a scale as had evidently been intended by the architect, I disposed of these rooms in the following fashion :—The stables were occupied by my horses. The department for buffaloes and cattle I transformed into a poultry-yard ; but, owing to the complete darkness that reigned in this place, the existence of the poultry could scarcely have been an enviable one. The flesh of the fowls was generally inferior, and the eggs—whenever they could be discovered—were small and tasteless. In one of the servants' rooms I kept constantly two sheep, who fattened under my surveillance. As soon as one of the pair had attained the desirable plumpness, he was slaughtered, and replaced by another. The sheep were of the long-tail species, and cost me, on an average, ten shillings and tenpence each, which can scarcely be considered a ruinous tariff, although it appeared a famine price to the eyes of the natives. The tail and the head of the sheep were the perquisites of the butcher, who was generally a soldier and an amateur. The tail, melted down, was an excellent substitute for butter. In the second servants' chamber I had accumulated a large stock of fire-wood.

A wooden ladder communicated with the first-floor, where I had established my own quarters. The first room was in a very dilapidated condition, and was

used by me as a species of granary. Here I kept a store of barley, for the consumption of the stables, and also all the bulky provisions I had brought from Erzeroum, such as potatoes, artichokes, and other articles completely ignored in Kars. This room was inhabited by Caro, an immense wolf-dog, of whom I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. Caro was tied to a window, which he constantly occupied, and employed his time, when he was not sleeping, in barking defiance at the colony of street dogs below. The adjoining room was the kitchen, and likewise the sleeping apartment of the groom. A door communicated with a species of alcove, inhabited by my dragoman, and led to the harem, which chamber I had furnished for my own occupation. This room merits especial description. It was of a very fair size, and lighted by three windows. The latter were covered, of course, with oiled paper, but the centre one was actually fitted up with a pane of real glass. This window was unique in Kars, and excited the jealousy of all my visitors. Along the walls were mirrors of Persian manufacture, and of a most unsatisfactory quality. One endowed the face with an unnatural obesity; another elongated it to a terrible extent, and a third threw an unhealthy colour on the complexion which was truly painful to behold. After having fallen myself victim to these unnatural mirrors, I derived a vast deal of amuse-

ment from the effect they created on the minds of my visitors. With that instinctive impulsion, so suggestive of the frailty of humanity, the first movements of my visitors were directed to these mirrors, —which, like the real pane of glass, were unique— and the aspect of despair that followed the hasty glance, was highly recreative. The space along the wall, not occupied by the mirrors, was covered with wood panels, ornamented with tin nails, forming grotesque figures. At the end of the room was the fire-place, with a very peculiar chimney, which was painted in brilliant colours. On each side of the fire-place were two raised spots, which I transformed into divans. The side of the room facing the window was likewise raised, and concealed by a curtain. This formed my sleeping apartment. The ceiling of the room was highly painted, and ornamented with pieces of mirror, and hooks for chandeliers, that did not exist. Cupboards of every imaginable size, and all ornamented with nails, abounded in this apartment. When I entered the house it was in a filthy condition; but after a good wash down it gradually assumed a more cheerful appearance. My dwelling-room I furnished with every available article, but these were rare. I ransacked the warehouses of the Persian merchants in the bazaars, and succeeded in discovering some matting, with which I covered the naked boards, and over this was placed a handsome

carpet. With great difficulty I found out a carpenter, who, having been as far as Trebizond, imagined himself perfectly au fait in matters of upholstery. After many serious failures, he succeeded in making me a species of table and some wooden stools, which formed the admiration of the camp. Some stuffed cushions made a very comfortable divan; and altogether, with a very trifling outlay, I rendered my residence, to a certain extent, comfortable. After I had been in possession of the house a few days, I received a visit from the owner, who scarcely recognised his harem again, thanks to the matting, the table, and other articles of European luxury that adorned it. This personage was a bey of ancient family, who owned several houses in Kars. He was a fine, handsome young fellow, splendidly dressed in the flowing robes of his nation, and was very dignified and pleasing in his manners. I could not help inwardly imagining the blow sustained by his national prejudice at thus seeing a stranger—a giaour—in the occupation of his chamber; and, moreover, his harem. That sanctuary had once been inhabited by his wives and family, who had, doubtless, often gazed in solemn doubt in the ill-conditioned mirrors, or had broken the monotony of their existence by means of the delightful pane of transparent glass.

Whatever were the inward sentiments of my land-

lord, he certainly did not betray them, and, after a few pipes and coffee, we became great friends. He told me the history of his family and of his ancestors, who had been petty chieftains in their time; and he was loud in his denunciations of the commanders of his nation. "Who is the Muchir?" he would exclaim. "Who are these Livahs, and Turks, and pachas, who eat up our country like wolves and magpies? I would not entrust to them the preparation of my pillau, or the cleaning of my pipe, and lo! they command armies, and trample upon me, who am the descendant of Beys!" My landlord occupied a large house inside the walls of Kars, and lived in great style. He remarked that I was careful of his property, and had improved, rather than damaged his rooms. We visited each other with great regularity, and were on very good terms until a little occurrence disturbed the cordiality of our relations. The "descendant of Beys" possessed a mare, which he was desirous of selling to me; but, as the quadruped in question displayed unmistakable signs of being troubled with glanders, I declined the proposition. This, apparently, hurt the feelings of my friend, who never afterwards entered my residence. With my neighbour, the Mollah, I was on very excellent terms. He supplied me with milk and butter from the produce of his dairy, and likewise sold me barley for my horses, and rice for home

consumption. The Mollah was a gay, jovial fellow, who never refused a glass of raki when we were quite alone ; and if he was not quite correct in the weight of his corn, or overcharged the rice, I overlooked the transgression, on account of his cloth. With my other neighbour, the Persian seraf, or banker, I was only on bowing terms. In the summer evenings, I at times smoked a cigar on the roof of my house, which was covered with long, soft grass, and would then infallibly discover my neighbour on the roof of his dwelling, inhaling a narghilhé. We would salute each other with great gravity, and continue smoking. As the shadows of evening darkened, the old Persian repeated his prayers, and then, saluting me with much dignity, scrambled down from the roof, and disappeared inside his house.

A door on my first floor communicated with a species of terrace that was constructed above the stables below, and had been, at one time, enclosed by wooden railings. A wooden ladder had also once led from this terrace to the road below ; but the soldiers had decamped with that and a major portion of the palings, and transformed the same into fire-wood.

When I first took possession of the house, this terrace was occupied by a colony of dogs, who held their position with great vigour and intrepidity. A few dashing charges, however, drove them to the

road below, where they speedily burrowed, and replied with interest to the savage roaring of my Caro. This terrace afforded me an excellent spot for pistol practising, with which highly intellectual employment I occupied one or two hours of each day. I was in the habit of rising at nine in the morning, at which time I breakfasted. About that period the regimental music of the troops ascending the Karadagh, burst forth. Having supported this infliction with commendable serenity of mind, I generally held a council of war with Georgio, my servant, on the bill of fare that was to compose my dinner. As, generally, there was nothing to be procured in Kars for love or money, beyond rice and sour milk, that measure might perhaps be considered as a waste of time; it was, however, with the identical view of wasting time, that every act I meditated or performed was inspired. There were, unfortunately, no books in the camp; and no means, beyond a chance game of chess, of improving one's mind. I discovered one book, a French work on "L'Infanterie," that I actually read and reperused until I loathed the very sight of the detestable green bound volume. If I bear ill-will towards any human being, it certainly is towards the anonymous author of that work; and I sincerely trust he has perished by the bayonets on which he discoursed so tediously. Talk of the heart-rending sufferings of the last man—is

not his loneliness surpassed, and are not the horror of his position exceeded, by those endured by a man limited to one book, and that a work on infantry?

Towards noon I took a gallop over the plain, and introduced a little animation into my system ; then dressed, and trifled away the time with pistol exercise until two. At that hour I generally mounted a fresh horse, and rode into the town to pay visits. At five, I dined, and generally invited one or two guests, who enlivened the proceedings of the badly supplied table. Over our coffee and pipes, we grumbled ourselves into good humour. Somebody of a melancholy turn of mind would introduce the subject of typhus, and express his firm conviction that no European would leave Kars alive. This subject had naturally no very jovial tendency, and one and all would then sigh deeply, and wish themselves back again to their respective homes. The natural progress of ideas next led to the examination of the merits of home, and the advantage of good dinners, quiet beds, absence of fleas, &c., &c. ; and in good time we would wax eloquent on that subject. Too intricate an analysis would, however, develop some disadvantageous points of view in our European civilisation, and the company would agree that after all Kars was not so bad a place, and that if one could only obtain something to eat or to drink, and if there were no cases of typhus and no Turks, it

might, as a *pis aller*, be rendered habitable. But above all, it was necessary that something exciting should occur, to break the fearful monotony that was the principal evil of our existence. The conversation on that point would become treasonable, for the most fervent hopes were expressed that, as the Turkish army could or would not advance against the Russians, the latter would adopt the alternative, and march against Kars. “*That* would be delightful!” was the unanimous exclamation.

Before the spirit of intrigue had developed itself to so deplorable an extent in the ranks of the European officers at Kars, social reunions were of constant occurrence. The Polish generals, Guyon, Colonel Thorne, and myself, gave alternate *soirées*, when much tea and rum were consumed, and sanguine expectation indulged in with respect to the future. These reunions generally commenced at nine o’clock, at which hour I quitted my house, encased in immense mud boots, and accompanied by my groom; who was provided with a lantern to guide the way, and a thick stick for the especial benefit of dogs of an aggressive temperament. It was too dangerous an action to venture into the streets on horseback after dark, owing to the frightful holes and crevices created by the masses of frozen snow and ice. It was a long and difficult task to thread our way even on foot; and if, as would sometimes happen, a gust

of wind blew out the paper lantern reduced one to utter helplessness, the accidents were disastrous. Captain De Cellis, as was once returning from a similar accident, a light was extinguished by the wind. He waited for a time, in the hope of encountering an individual provided with a light, but in vain; for the inhabitants of Kars, as was in the habit of retiring to rest at sunset. This officer crept onwards in darkness, when suddenly the ground beneath him gave way, and he found himself up to his knees in mud. Fortunately, his long legs saved him from being completely immersed, the result might have been otherwise, as was, Captain De Cellis rescued him from this difficulty, and after a ramble of about half an hour, wet clothes, and in total darkness, he encountered a patrol, who furnished him with a light. This unlucky accident to Captain De Cellis was followed by a severe illness, from which he recovered.

The evenings that no reunions were held with General Guyon, where a few Saxons would meet. At eleven o'clock I retired to my quarters, and after a careful examination of my bedclothes, followed by a sanguinary attack of the fleas, turned into my improvised

tempted to imagine myself perfectly comfortable. Thus passed the generality of my days during the winter and spring. Under canvas it was very different. Sometimes, however, events more exciting would occur; but these were of rare occurrence.

My periodical expeditions to the neighbouring villages in search of supplies, were, in the winter months, a source of considerable amusement. In the bazaars of Kars no provisions of any kind were to be found: at times a little rice arrived, but it was bought up at once by the half-famished inhabitants. Eggs, the staple article of food, were becoming very scarce; and owing to their value, it was found impossible to induce the women to dispose of their poultry. The bread was very bad, and daily declining in quality: the loaves were thin and oblong, like very brown pancakes, and very heavy. Mutton could sometimes be obtained in the bazaar, but it was of inferior quality and suspicious. Buffalo flesh was abundant, but only extreme necessity would induce people to purchase that tough, rank, and disagreeable article. The tables of the pashas were little better supplied than those of the subalterns; and eggs, bread, and mutton dressed in garlic, formed the principal *menu*. At times coffee became scarce, and then affairs looked really serious, for that beverage and tobacco were the only consolation that remained to the camp. For a fortnight there

was a total absence of candles, and all Kars, with very few happy exceptions, retired to bed at six o'clock. The provisions I had brought with me from Erzeroum proved of the greatest service, and I lived in comparative luxury for a time. As my stock diminished, it became necessary to adopt energetic measures to keep off the evil hour when I should be reduced to a diet of eggs and water. I considered it preferable to undergo a little fatigue and annoyance, rather than to rely on the bazaars of Kars for means of existence, and therefore scoured the neighbouring villages for provisions. On some fine freezing morning when the surface of the plain was endowed with an extra firmness, I rose early, and accompanied by all my household and a guide, started on an expedition in search of food. The snow on the plain being of an uniform depth, offered not the slightest danger, but the progress of the horses was slow and tedious. The guide, who belonged to one of the distant villages, marched ahead, and sturdily forced his way through the wall of snow. Every ten minutes we halted to allow the horses, who were sadly taxed by constantly sinking in the deep snow, a little rest. The villages could easily be discerned from the white plain, from which they rose like dark shadows. Those in the immediate vicinity of Kars had been completely ransacked by repeated requisitions on the part of the

authorities of the town. It was, therefore, mere loss of time to halt at these ; so we continued on our way.

After three or four hours' journey, some out of the way place would offer a fair prospect of affording me the supplies I required, and there we drew up. The head of the village would appear, and invite me to his house. A roaring fire soon restored warmth to my benumbed limbs, and then, Georgio, my servant, commenced his culinary preparations. As a matter of policy, I always carried a supply of coffee, sugar, and tobacco, on these excursions ; and to their soothing influence was I mainly indebted for constant success. The head of the village would accept my invitation to coffee and pipes, and we soon became good friends. He would inquire the latest news from Kars, the state of the army, what the Giaours, viz., the Russians, were doing, and when the bills delivered by the government authorities were to be redeemed. To these questions I replied to the best of my ability. In the village, it soon became known that an English bey had arrived with coffee, sugar, and tobacco. Every moment a fresh visitor appeared at the door, was invited inside by the host, and seated himself. Once seated, the new comer saluted me with a "Hosch geldim, saffer geldim," and cast a wistful glance at the coffee-pot simmering on the fire. I replied with the infallible "Saffer geldim, hosch geldim," and the coffee-pot

was sent round. After an hour or so, the greater portion of the village was assembled in the rooms, talking over the war; whilst, in the back-ground, were the little children and women gazing at the English bey, who was treating their husbands, and owned an inexhaustible supply of sugar.

The moment was propitious, and with great diplomatic tact, Georgio, my man, opened the proceedings of the day. As soon, however, as the real object of my visit became apparent, a ludicrous terror seized on the inhabitants, who evidently thought they were about to be denounced to the war authorities, and robbed of their property. To inquiries about fowls, eggs, barley, &c., they replied with an unanimous "joch," or none. It was "tauch joch;" "imurta joch;" chopped straw for the horses, "joch;" in fact, nothing, "joch." This was highly unsatisfactory, but by instilling into the minds of the good people, that so far from wishing to deprive them of their property I was prepared to pay them handsomely for their wares, a little tranquillity was restored to their troubled minds. I then produced a large bag of piastres, a very dirty, worthless coin, of the accepted value of two-pence; but of no intrinsic worth. A little judicious jingling of the bag produced its effect, and one individual thought that, perhaps, his wife might, for a consideration, spare a few eggs. I paid this man the price

he asked, and this was, generally, an exorbitant one.

No sooner had this intrepid speculator set the example, than a general eagerness was displayed to overwhelm me with eggs. I took a large supply of them, at a reduced tariff, and then, after a little time, the hens that had produced the eggs were exhibited and purchased. Then pigeons and chopped straw. Probably, also, barley and more eggs would be produced, and either purchased or declined. The investment in sheep was a more difficult task. The immense fleece that covers the Anatolian sheep gives the animal an aspect of corpulency to which it can lay not the slightest claim ; beneath the wool exists nothing but bones and skin, and it required an experience which I did not possess to distinguish the least miserable member of the flock. The price demanded for the sheep was, generally, 130 piastres, or a sovereign ; that given, was from forty to sixty piastres, or, on an average, eight shillings and four-pence per head. After I had bargained for two sheep, some philanthropic individual would propose to sell me a buffalo ; an offer I respectfully declined. Having made arrangements for the delivery of the purchases, I prepared to depart. The sun was now tinging the far-reaching plain, with a beautiful roseate hue ; the gray of winter evening had enveloped the stern ruins of the castle of Kars in a semi-obscurity, and it became

imperative to hasten back to the town. The horses were brought round, a distribution of sugar was made to the delighted children and mothers, a farewell to the villagers was followed by an universal "God be with you!" and we slowly returned on our steps.

The calm tranquillity of the snow-covered plain, unbroken by a single noise, save the fluttering of thousands of gay-coloured magpies and the distant howling of some village-dog or wandering jackal, was impressive in the highest degree. As we approached the town, and, at length, entered the high road to Erzeroum, the scene became more varied. Large caravans of horses and mules, laden with cannon-balls, corn, and ammunition, slowly advanced along the path of snow, broken by continued traffic, whilst the bells that hung round the necks of the wearied and famished animals, rang out a joyous peal, in mockery, as it were, of their sufferings. The monotonous chant of the muleteers, rose at times, above the noise of the caravan, as with a loud "Ill Allah, all Allah," they hailed the setting sun. A few would remain behind, and kneeling in the snow, address their evening prayer to the Almighty, and then, with shouts of "Allah kerim" (God is merciful), regain their companions. Presently a turn in the road discovered the town; and, in a few minutes, we were again picking our way in the infected streets of Kars.

In one of these expeditions, I happened to espy, in a village stable, two birds, the sight of which caused me indescribable pleasure. In my peregrinations in Armenia, I had never hitherto encountered any of the larger members of the poultry-yard, such as geese, ducks, or turkeys ; and I now observed, waddling before me, two very fine geese. To decide their owner on parting with his property, was a difficult task ; but, at length, after the conclusion of a ruinous bargain, I rode off in triumph with my prize. These two geese created a sensation in Kars, and the first inquiries of my visitors were to be permitted to gaze once more on these members of a forgotten civilisation. No sooner had I purchased the geese, than a brilliant idea struck me, which I hastened to carry into execution. My stock of luxuries from Erzeroum was rapidly diminishing, and a few weeks more would have witnessed the total disappearance of my gastronomic treasures ; I therefore, determined to consume the whole in one good banquet, the triumphant *plat* of which was to be furnished by the two geese. In order to increase my anticipated triumph, and to deaden expectation, I put in circulation the most sinister rumours in connection with the geese ; and while the camp was commenting on the wonderful voracity of my wolf-dog, Caro, who was falsely accused of having devoured them, the two birds were daily increasing in good

looks and obesity. At length, the propitious moment arrived, and I accordingly issued notes of invitation to my intended guests.

The idea of giving a dinner-party in a famishing town, where it was a matter of incredible difficulty to obtain materials to keep life and soul together, was considered so absurdly original that I experienced great trouble in convincing my guests that I was not hoaxing them. In the meantime the most extensive preparations were going on in my house to render the entertainment as magnificent as possible. Georgio, who was a famous cook, entered into the spirit of the thing amazingly; but I fancied his zeal was stimulated by the notion of consuming all my provisions at one swoop, by which means I should be reduced to bread and eggs, and his culinary troubles would then cease. I had brought with me from Erzeroum a few plates, knives and forks, and glasses, but not in a quantity to suffice for a banquet of the magnitude I contemplated. In the camp there were no such articles to be borrowed. General Guyon possessed, it is true, some silver mugs, which he had lent me for the occasion, as well as some stools; but with regard to plates and cutlery I was in a dilemma. Fortunately, after some trouble, Georgio discovered in the bazaar an old Armenian trader who had once taken a quantity of china ware for a bad debt, and who jumped at the unexpected offer made him

to purchase the lot. These plates were of remarkable pattern, and had been manufactured for the Persian market. They were covered with extraordinary figures representing what was considered in Staffordshire to be Persian habits and customs.

Major Sheidenberg, who had the superintendence of the workmen attached to the army, lent me a carpenter, who forthwith manufactured a table of the required dimensions. Materials for a cloth and napkins were purchased in the bazaar, and made up by a little Armenian tailor in the town. Two days before the entertainment the geese were decapitated, and everything prepared for a "great success." Then, however, it was discovered that the kitchen-fire offered no possibility of roasting, and boiled geese would scarcely have been a palatable dish; the birds were therefore entrusted to the care of the baker, Cosmo, who contracted for the supply of the army, and who promised to turn them out in magnificent style. The geese being killed were given to my one-eyed groom to pluck, and whilst that interesting operation was supposed to be going on, I suddenly heard a fearful tumult arise from below stairs. In amazement, at what could be the reason of such an unusual noise, I rushed below, and there, lying on the floor, was a *skinned* goose,—the cause of the disturbance. It appeared that the barbarian of a groom, who had never seen a goose in his life,

had misunderstood the orders of Georgio, and had actually skinned the first goose with infinite care and trouble. One of the two birds was thus miserably placed *hors de combat*, and my brightest hopes were dimmed. Georgio, however, managed to procure a little sage from the medical-chest of one of the regiments—how it got there I really do not know—and by the delicate preparation of the remaining goose, promised to make amends for the unhappy fate of the other. In the morning of the day appointed for the banquet, the bird was carried with great solemnity to Cosmo the baker, who received special instructions with respect to the treasure confided to him. The whole day Georgio was indefatigable in his exertions. By dint of extraordinary perseverance he had actually contrived to manufacture, by some unknown means, ice-creams, which he flavoured with vanilla procured from the hospital. My guests were General Guyon, Arslan Pacha, Shahin Pacha, Neveris Bey, and an Italian physician—a clever and gentlemanly man—Dr. Medana. General Kmeti was on an expedition to the outposts, and could not be present. The invitations were issued for half-past six. Now it must be known that in the East the hours of the day are regulated by the rising and setting of the sun, consequently it was a moral impossibility to divine the exact time appointed. The consequence was that Arslan Pacha arrived at six,

Guyon at seven, and the remainder of the guests at a little past that hour. This delay threw Georgio, who took a legitimate pride in the dinner, into a fever of impatience. At six he communicated to me that all was going on well; at seven he called me outside my room with a look of such unutterable anguish that premised some fearful catastrophe. "Look, sir!" he exclaimed, pointing with a trembling finger to a black mass placed on a dish carried by the one-eyed groom, who was vainly attempting to stifle a hyena-like grin,—“Look, sir,” he repeated, “that’s the goose!” In spite of my vexation and disappointment, I could not contain a melancholy laugh. The goose had been forgotten by the baker, and had been done to a cinder. The failure was handed over to the groom, who, I regret to say, made himself very ill on the stuffing, all of which he devoured at one sitting. This was a heavy blow, but very fortunately not a fatal one. At eight the dinner commenced, and went off with great *éclat*. The following was the bill of fare:—

Vermicelli Soup.
 Stewed fish.
 Boiled tongue and caper sauce.
 Pigeon pie.
 Boiled leg of mutton and caper sauce (*rechauffé*).
 Artichokes—Potatoes—Spinach.
 Iced Creams.
 Ices.
 Turkish sweetmeats.
 Marsala—Champagne—Bottled stout—Curacoa.

The Vermicelli, tongues, vegetables, wines, and beer were brought by me from Erzeroum.

The pigeons and the mutton were from the neighbourhood of Kars.

The fish were procured for me by a first cousin of the groom's, who broke a hole in the Karstschai, and hooked them out by some mysterious agency.

I look back with feelings of pride to this banquet, the recollection of which afforded me deep consolation under the subsequent diet of tough mutton, eggs, and yaourt (sour milk). It is customary for the orderlies, pipe-bearers, and lantern-carriers, to accompany their masters on similar occasions. One of the servants' rooms below—that formerly occupied by the geese—was cleaned out for the use of these gentlemen, who, under the presidency of the one-eyed groom, partook of a bountiful meal. I had entered into a contract with my neighbour, the Mollah, who undertook to supply them with unlimited pillaw and kebebs. This he carried out most faithfully, and, with the male members of his family, he joined the company and displayed great condescension and social qualifications. The groom, who was a wit in his way, favoured the company below stairs with descriptions of his travels and adventures. He had been as far as Jerusalem in his time, and was gifted with great descriptive powers. This I presumed from the mirth indulged in by the assembled orderlies and

pipe-bearers, whose laughter must have been peculiarly distressing to the sheep who were confined in the next room, the neighbourhood of which was doubtlessly ignored by the company. After a parting toast in favour of the army of Kars, we broke up. The grooms brought round the horses, the pipe-bearers packed away their master's chibouks, the lantern-bearers lighted their paper lanterns, and in a few minutes the neighbourhood was wrapped in complete darkness and silence.

Thus terminated that eventful day.

CHAPTER XIV.

LIFE IN KARS (*continued*).

OWING to the scarcity occasioned by the war, the prices of every article of consumption had naturally increased to a terrible extent, and this exercised a most pernicious influence on the circumstances of the unfortunate townspeople and peasants. The stock of grain, and the herds and flocks possessed by the inhabitants of Kars and the surrounding villages, were seized by the military authorities, who indemnified the owners by written acknowledgments of the debt; these were to be repaid at some more favourable time, a period which has not yet arrived. The value of articles of daily consumption had increased fourfold, and the consequent misery entailed upon the struggling population may be imagined. Sheep which, in former times, were sold at two shillings and sixpence a head, now fetched from nine to twelve shillings. Fowls, once valued at two-pence halfpenny, were worth sixteenpence, and were difficult to obtain. Eggs, once procurable at the

rate of twenty-five for a piastre, were now worth three a piastre, or twopence. Fire-wood had augmented fearfully in value; a block, formerly esteemed at ten piastres, now fetched sixty and eighty. The prices of flour, barley, coffee, tobacco, meat, and oil had increased in proportion, and were often not to be obtained. Formerly, horses could be kept at sixpence a day, including the wages of a groom; but the scarcity of barley and of chopped straw had now increased the cost to upwards of two shillings, not including the services of a groom. Wages had augmented greatly: a servant at one time was paid at the rate of six shillings and eightpence the month, and now forty shillings was currently paid. These prices, in our English eyes, cannot be considered extravagant. Many a housewife at home would be delighted to purchase a fowl at sixteenpence, or a sheep at thirteen shillings; but in the poverty-stricken province of Armenia a far different view was taken of the matter. During my sojourn at Kars, the famine-price continued to increase, and at the present moment, I believe, the value of every article has nearly attained the figures current in more civilised countries. Horses that were purchased in 1853 for six hundred piastres are now worth two to three thousand, and are becoming scarce. Such are the consequences of war, and when I heard the peasants and townspeople pray for peace

at any price, even at the loss of national independence, I could feel neither surprise nor anger. The hardships of the times fell, as usual, upon those classes least able to support them. By the pachas the increase in prices was scarcely felt, and they were still able to accumulate their savings. The purses of the European officers were also not much affected by the prevailing dearness; and, for my own part, I lived at Kars at scarcely a greater expense than I could have done in Paris or London, and with far more satisfactory results. The wages of servants were the only extravagant item of expenditure, but these were really excessive. Thus the wages of a dragoman were as high as one hundred pounds a-year, a sum paid by Colonel Thorne; I was more fortunate in only paying mine at the rate of seven hundred piastres a month. Grooms, who were utterly worthless, demanded, and obtained, thirty shillings a month, with board and lodging—a tariff unheard-of in these regions of Asia. A great compensation existed in the cheapness of horse-keep, and the comparative low prices at which first-rate horses were to be purchased. In the bazaars of Erzeroum and Kars, horses of every race known in the surrounding countries were to be obtained: Arab, Kurdish, Anatolian, Persian, and Turcoman horses were offered in abundance, and at prices absurdly low, in our English estimation. The

repeated purchases made by the English government have since, doubtlessly, effected a change for the worse. The horses of the above races are admirably adapted for every service, with the exception of that demanded by heavy cavalry. Swift, and endowed with wonderful powers of resisting fatigue and hunger, these admirable little horses are unsurpassed for real working qualities by any in the world. The Arab horses and mares, especially those of Syria and the desert, bear away the palm from their competitors in every respect; excepting, perhaps, that of beauty of shape. The Turcoman and Kurdish horses are excellent, and are endowed with great elegance of limb. The Persian breed are larger, but less powerful, and, in my opinion, inferior to either of the two first-mentioned races. The Anatolian horse is distinguished by no eminent qualities, and is the cheapest, as well as the least valuable, of the Asiatic breeds. The beauty of form possessed by the Turcoman and Kurdish horses is only surpassed by their intelligence and docile qualities. Although nine-tenths of the Asiatic horses are stallions, no vicious propensities are ever exhibited by these *chefs d'œuvres* of creation; and in Asia a horse is truly a companion, rather than a slave, to man. Even amongst themselves, examples of wilful bad temper are rare; they snort and paw the air in defiance of one another, but, in a few

minutes, when English stallions would be in the last stage of mortal combat, these more amiable quadrupeds are fraternising and playing together.

The love of society that animates the Asiatic horse is strongly developed. In long and tedious journeys along the snow-white plains, or over the monotonous grass meadows of Armenia, I always derived a certain amount of amusement from merely watching the movements of the horse I was riding. Before the eye or the ear could detect a living object, the horses of the company had pricked up their ears and commenced a low neighing. Gradually the neighing became more violent, and a reply would be heard in the contrary direction. A caravan speedily became visible, and the horses of the two parties welcomed each other with endless neighs. If not controlled, the animals halted and proceeded to smell each other's nose; each sniff became more violent, and concluded in a fearful outburst of snorting and neighing, accompanied with prancing in the air, after which both parties would leisurely continue on their journey. These horses have but two natural paces—a walk and a full gallop. The latter is the pace they prefer, and the delight of an Asiatic horse is to be launched into gallop with some score of equally joyous companions. They are broken in, however, with great ease and rapidity. A little Persian horse, that I purchased in Erzeroum,

became, in a short time, a famous trotter, and excited the admiration of the British connoisseurs before Sebastopol. The value of the respective breeds was proportionate to their merits. Thus, an Arab stallion (mares were not to be purchased), if provided with a genuine genealogical table, was purchaseable at prices varying from twenty-five to fifty guineas. A similar horse, if conveyed safely to England or to Paris, where they are more esteemed, would readily have sold for one hundred and fifty sovereigns. A Kurdish, Turcoman, Persian, or Anatolian horse could be obtained at prices varying from five to twenty-five pounds. I had a stud of five horses, the total cost of which amounted to less than 6000 piastres, or under 50*l*. This number comprised a very showy Turcoman sorrel charger, named Caplan, 18*l*.; Macao, a jet black ambler, for travelling, 14*l*.; Arslan, my little Persian, 10*l*.; two Anatolian horses, for servants or baggage, together, 8*l*. These five animals rendered me admirable service throughout the whole campaign in Asia; and subsequently, three of them went through the flank march, and other little vicissitudes in the Crimea, where they are still alive and well. Probably these horses little dreamt, when they first entered my stables at Kars, of the adventures they were destined to witness, and the strange countries they were to visit. The luggage horses I disposed of at Trebizond, on my

return to Constantinople; and the last account I heard of them was to the effect that they had formed part of a caravan which had been stopped on the borders of Persia by the Russians; and they are, probably, now occupied in carrying provisions to Tiflis, or for the relief of the garrison of Gumri. The other three accompanied me to the Crimea; and, when fever and dysentery had worked on my health what the hardships of Asia had failed to effect, I disposed of them, before leaving, to friends in that Peninsula. Caplan is now mounted by a French staff officer; Macao, by another staff officer, attached to the Sardinian army; and my little Arslan is the property of the British postmaster to the expedition, who fully appreciates the gentleness of disposition and admirable qualities of my old favourite.

The grooms in the east are, generally, a worthless set of men, being often morose and always indolent. The greater portion of the stable men with the army were Arabs; and, strange to say, very few knew anything of the business they professed. The rich pachas, who possessed large studs, had one head groom, named the *sais-bachi*, who had the superintendence of the remaining *sais* or grooms. The *sais-bachi* never touched even the mane of a horse; his duties were to walk by the side of his master's charger and to keep a look-out on the proceedings

of the stable-men. The care and pride taken in an English stable, by the attendants, are ignored in the East, where the *sais* considers his duty performed when his horses are fed, taken to water, and dusted. Veterinary surgeons are unknown in this part of the world, for the ignorant blacksmiths who accompany the cavalry regiments by no means deserve that title.

The horses enjoy unusual health; very few of the diseases that ravage an English stud were known in Kars. One complaint—the grease—was universal in the spring; but it proceeded chiefly from want of attention on the part of the grooms. Half the cavalry regiments, and almost all the horses belonging to private individuals, were thus placed, for a time, hors de combat. The food given in winter and autumn to the Asiatic horses consists in chopped straw and barley: the latter is given at sunrise and sunset, in the respective quantities of six and five double handfulls. In spring, the animals are taken to graze on the magnificent and abundant meadows, where they remain until the grass has entirely disappeared. The shoes made by the Turks are clumsy in the extreme, and consist of plates of iron, with a very small circular opening.

The bridles used are very simple, and easy to the horse: the gentle nature of these animals prohibit the employment of the ponderous English military bit. The Turkish bridles are often very

handsome, being composed of silk instead of leather, whilst plates of silver and pendants of horse-hair adorn the head of the horse. Saddles of every description were used, from the little racing saddle to the heavy German article: the cavalry were supplied with a very convenient saddle, made after an European pattern. The bashi-bazooks and the country people employed the old Mameluke saddle, which is the most uncomfortable article that can well be imagined. The seat forms a kind of arm-chair, from which hang two stirrups of a broad shovel shape; and the stirrups are drawn up so high that the knee appears nearly on a level with the horse's head, a position extremely inconvenient for a foreigner: added to which, the body must be very correctly balanced in the saddle, to avoid turning over.

The Turks are the best, but, at the same time, the least graceful riders, that I have seen. A Turk is never thrown: he may fall with his horse, but never alone. The regular cavalry, who have been trained to mount with the long stirrups, are inferior riders, and seem to have lost all confidence in their inborn equestrian skill. The horses of the Turkish cavalry are sturdy little beasts, capable of supporting great fatigue, but scarcely broken in to the necessary standard; the artillery horses are inferior, and over-tasked. To draw, is contrary to the nature of an Asiatic horse, whose limbs are not

endowed with the vigour and strength of muscle necessary for that service. Some of the pachas at **Kars** possessed very fine studs; but their most valuable mares and stallions were kept at their respective estates, far from the noise and uncertainties of war. Guyon owned a large stud, comprising some very fine Arab stallions, and a beautiful little Arab mare of the purest blood. The Muchir likewise possessed some valuable animals.

The mules of the country were few in number, but the Arabian colonels and pachas possessed some splendid specimens of this valuable animal.

The Syrian mule is nearly equal in size to the highest horse of the country, and far exceeds the latter in point of strength and powers of endurance; their disposition is, however, vicious and unyielding. The price of a good mule was higher than that demanded for a good horse; twenty pounds being the usual price for a full-grown mule. The camels employed in the transport of provisions, and in the commerce with Persia, were of immense size and power. Twenty-five pounds was currently demanded for a healthy camel.

In the high plains of Armenia wild beasts are comparatively unknown. A few packs of wolves and jackals at times venture into the plains in the winter months, but the absence of forests preserves the inhabitants of those regions

from the annoyances supported by their countrymen in the neighbourhood of Trebizond. In the forests that divide that town from Erzeroum, bears, wolves, and wild boars abound. The villagers capture and destroy large quantities of cubs; thus keeping the number of the Bruin tribe within reasonable limits. I was offered several of these juvenile bears at the rate of twenty piastres, or 3*s.* 4*d.* a head, but declined the bargain. I afterwards met one of these little fellows in the "Caradoc" despatch steamer, on the Black Sea station; he was a general favourite with the officers and sailors, and was repeatedly pardoned the sad havoc he created amongst the poultry and turkeys that were on board.

The wolves and jackals, though they abound in the pachalicks of Trebizond and Erzeroum, are not so dangerous as might be anticipated. They rarely attack man, even when pushed by the pangs of hunger, but subsist chiefly on the carcasses of caravan horses or mules that have succumbed on the road. In winter the wolves enjoy a splendid time of it, and exercise, with the crows and magpies, the functions of public scavengers: they are the sanitary commissioners of the roads, as the street dogs are of the towns and cities. The large herds of sheep and goats that wander over the grass plains of the country are protected from the ravages of the lupine race by a breed of magnificent dogs, whose

size, power, and intelligence are unequalled. Two of these dogs suffice to guard a herd of two or three hundred sheep, and the loss of a single head is rarely known.

I possessed one of these wolf-hounds, which had been presented to me by Colonel Tevis. Caro, for that was his name, excited universal admiration, and would have created a thrill of pleasure in the appreciating soul of Sir Edwin Landseer. For height, strength, nobility of appearance, and courage, Caro was superior to any dog of his race; and these admirable qualities, enhanced by the best temper ever possessed by dog, rendered him an especial favourite with everybody. My enthusiasm for this animal is excusable; and when, in the confusion of the retreat on Kars, he was lost, I experienced feelings of genuine sorrow. Caro, although only sixteen months old, was of immense height: when raised on his hind paws, his forefeet overtowered the highest man in the camp; a thick tawny coat covered his thin and muscular neck and body, and a tail of great size curled over his back. But the finest point of Caro was his head, which bore a perfect resemblance in its shape, in the colour of the eye, formation of the jaws, even to the peculiar marks across the face and the shape of the ears, to a full-grown lioness. Colonel Tevis had purchased this wolf-hound in a village, not far from Yenikoi,

having been struck by the noble appearance of the creature. He succeeded with great difficulty, and only by dint of a handsome remuneration, in prevailing on the peasants to part with their dog, which was of a family peculiarly valued by the shepherds.

Although Caro had been living from puppyhood with Turks, he had no sooner become accustomed to Europeans, than he displayed a violent antipathy to his former friends. Whenever a Turkish soldier or an inhabitant of Kars chanced to pass my house, Caro was in the habit of bursting out into a frantic roar, which continued until the object of his excitement had disappeared from sight. This dog was tied up in a large room furnished with six windows, from one of which he would protrude his head and watch eagerly for something to bark at. The street dogs below nearly drove him mad, by assembling under the windows to which he was attached and barking defiance at him. Twice a day Caro was allowed to take a walk, at the period when the neighbours were engaged at their meals and were safe from his aggressions. Twice a day, then, Caro took exercise, which invariably was of the most violent nature. No sooner was the collar taken from his neck, than with a frantic rush he was on the terrace; a leap, and one or two tremendous bounds, brought him in the midst of the street dogs, who were either taking a siesta or wrangling over

their dinners. The nearest dogs were turned over and half strangled before the company had recovered from their surprise; then a desultory fight would ensue—a species of skirmishing between the flying dogs and the pursuing Caro. After having inflicted punishment enough on his foes, the latter would return, wagging his tail in triumph, and commence an investigation of the commissariat arrangements of the departed enemy. A scornful sniff of the half-devoured bones proved the disgust entertained by Caro for putrid horse-flesh, and he forthwith ascended the terrace, where he enjoyed the heat of the sun and growled at the flies. This terrace, on my arrival, was garrisoned by a colony of street dogs, who were however speedily dislodged; but two of these animals returned the next day, and were permitted to remain. These were a mother and a little one-eyed son; between whom and Caro a friendship was speedily contracted, and an offensive and defensive alliance concluded. The little one-eyed dog was gifted with great intelligence, a quality also largely developed in Caro, and constantly accompanied the latter in his rambles. In the engagements he served as aide-de-camp to Caro, pursued the flying enemy with vigour, and very often came in for more blows than his larger companion. At times the two would push on towards the town, but were invariably repulsed by the

immense colony of dogs concentrated in the market-place.

In time, Caro became the happy father of a numerous family, who displayed all the pugnacious qualities of their sire; the puppies had no sooner attained sufficient strength of limb, than they drove away the street dogs below, and took possession of their burrows. One day my neighbour the Mollah came to tell me that in passing by the market-place he had remarked a terrible disturbance, in which he fancied my wolf-hound was engaged. I sent off the groom at once, armed with a big stick, to preserve Caro from inevitable destruction; but at the moment the man was leaving, an approaching bark announced the return of the former, and presently Caro made his appearance, surrounded by his family and his stepson, all more or less covered with blood, but wagging their tails and filling the air with demonstrations of triumph. Caro accompanied me to the camp at Hadji Velikoi, and I shall have occasion to write of him in another chapter.

Besides the breed of wolf-hounds, there are one or two other races of dogs in Armenia. The Persian greyhounds are very numerous, and specimens of that race will, doubtless, have been seen in this country by many of my readers. They are distinguished from the Italian greyhound, by the ears and tail; the latter being crowned at the tip with a pe-

culiar bush of hair, similar in shape to the spear-like termination with which ancient artists have endowed their vomiting dragons. It would be worthy the attention of our amateur dog-fanciers to introduce the breed of wolf-hounds into this country. They are comparatively unknown, but two or three of these animals which had been sent as presents by our consuls in Asia to friends in England, excited the admiration of connoisseurs. The street dogs of Asia, are far more ferocious and powerful than the mongrels of Constantinople or Smyrna, and can lay claim to some good external points. During the period I am describing, a species of plague set in amongst those of Kars, and carcases of dead dogs were even more numerous than those of horses and cattle. In consequence of this mortality amongst the canine scavengers, the foul remains of many of the dead horses and oxen remained to rot in the streets, and greatly increased the intensity of the prevailing typhus.

Birds of prey are numerous in the high plains of Armenia; but owing to the absence of trees, other species of birds are rare. During my long stay in that part of Asia, I never cast eye on a single serpent, or snake. Rats are, I believe, unknown in Erzeroum, or Kars, though they abound in Trebizond. Mice, unfortunately for my slumbers, were, on the contrary, plentiful.

In the neighbourhood of Erzeroum, wild sheep exist, and offer some excitement to the sportsman; but they are difficult to approach, and to kill. Partridges, widgeons, and in some places, snipes also, are plentiful. Grey-plovers, herons, and river birds, are likewise to be met with in large quantities. Mr. Brant, our consul at Erzeroum, introduced pheasants to the country, but the breed soon died away. That gentleman was more fortunate in another attempt he made to confer a benefit on the land he has inhabited for so long a period. This was the introduction into Armenia of the potato. At first, the invincible fanaticism of the nation led them to regard that valuable vegetable as a diabolical article of consumption, and the fields, where the potatoes had been planted, were torn up, over and over again. Common sense, at length, triumphed, and now a considerable consumption of the potato is noticed at Erzeroum. Artichokes, and a kind of spinach, are also to be found; but no other vegetables exist, to my knowledge. The land in Armenia, is but little cultivated. The total absence of roads to the sea is a great drawback to the country, and the ground is tilled only in quantity enough to keep famine from the door of the peasant. Under a liberal and honest government, Armenia would become a valuable province; as it is, it is a worthless appendage to the crown of the Padishah.

The reader will not have forgotten Colonel Thorne, with whom I travelled from Trebizond to Erzeroum. That gentleman had been detained by ill health at the last-named town, but towards the end of April he pushed on to Kars, where he arrived in a very feeble condition. Colonel Thorne, who was far from being a young man, had never recovered from the sufferings he had endured in the journey to Erzeroum, and the absence of proper food at Kars had a pernicious influence on his delicate health. Major Bonfanti and myself obtained a house for him in the neighbourhood of my abode, and did all that lay in our power to render his position as agreeable as possible. Unhappily, day by day, the health of the poor old soldier declined, and it was soon evident that his constitution had received a serious blow. The society of Colonel Thorne was one of the few luxuries attainable at Kars, and I felt the days grow shorter and less tedious after his arrival. It would perhaps have been better had he remained at Erzeroum instead of proceeding to Kars; but as "special correspondent of the *Times*," he felt it his duty to establish himself at the head-quarters of the Anatolian army.

Shortly after his arrival, Colonel Thorne heard that the Muchir had expressed a determination not to allow strangers to accompany the army on its

march to the frontier, and this naturally excited his anger. Putting on his uniform, with the insignia of the Guelphic Order of which he was a knight, he proceeded to the Muchir, and discoursed with such eloquence on the rights of an ally, and alluded so disagreeably to Lord Redcliffe and Viscount Palmerston, that the Turkish commander renounced all hostile intentions towards us unfortunate aliens. This little excitement had no good effect on the health of the Colonel, whose debilitated condition increased sadly.

Both the Colonel and myself had felt ourselves at a loss in what manner to forward our letters to England, as there was no postal communication between Kars and Erzeroum. The Colonel left the arrangement of this matter to me, and I succeeded before long in establishing a regular communication between the two towns. After trying several schemes with mounted Tartars, which were very expensive and not successful, I engaged three swift sais, or messengers, who undertook to serve me and the Colonel only. Two of these men were constantly on the road—one coming from and the other proceeding to Erzeroum. Every Tuesday morning one of the messengers started from Kars with our correspondence, which he delivered to our agents in Erzeroum, and then returned with any letters and newspapers

that had arrived for us from Constantinople. My letters were taken to Mr. Marinoglu, an Armenian merchant of Erzeroum, who was kind enough to transact my business, and were forwarded by him, under cover, to Mr. Pirjantz, of Trebizond, who remitted them in his turn to Constantinople. Some considerable time elapsed before the letters reached London: the period generally taken for accomplishing the whole distance from Kars to London was a month. In their transmission they passed through six different hands, and the postage in the end reached a very pretty figure. A Tartar left Erzeroum every Monday morning for Trebizond, and it was the duty of my sai to arrive at Mr. Marinoglu's in time for the departure of the former. Mr. Marinoglu then handed my messenger all the letters that had arrived for the Europeans at Kars, and, loading him besides with coffee, candles, and other articles not to be procured at head-quarters, despatched him home. The arrival of the sai was an event in Kars. He brought us the latest information from Europe, for which we thirsted, and the letters from home that were awaited with so much anxiety. In time, the whole correspondence of the Europeans passed through our sais, and on Tuesday morning my room looked like a country post-office. The third messenger was kept at Kars in the event of the others falling

ill, or of intelligence of importance demanding immediate attention.

These messengers were all grey-headed old men, and were famous for their pedestrian feats. The power of endurance possessed by the class which they adorned is remarkable, and their honesty and zeal are above suspicion. Only two accidents occurred during my stay in Armenia, in connection with these men, whereby the correspondence of Colonel Thorne and myself was delayed. In one instance the poor messenger was struck snow-blind on the road : from which, by-the-by, he never recovered ; and in the other case the sai was waylaid by robbers and despoiled. The contents of the old man's wallet must have astonished these uncultivated brigands, though they certainly failed to enrich them.

CHAPTER XV.

THE OUTPOSTS—THE BASHI-BAZOOKS.

THE first weeks of April were stormy in Kars, and the snow on the plain increased to the most disastrous extent. Towards the 15th of the month, however, the snowstorms and the whirlwinds ceased, and everything betokened an approaching change of season. The weather was still cold, and the snow firm, so I determined to avail myself of an invitation I had received from General Kmeti to visit the outposts, before the white plain of Kars would be transformed into a sea of mud. General Kmeti (Ismail Pacha), who was engaged in inspecting the frontiers, and to whom the guard of the outposts and the task of preventing a surprise on the part of the enemy were confided, had established his head-quarters at the village of Perghet.

This little village, since destroyed by the Russians, was six hours ride from Kars, and the same distance separated it from the Arpatschai, which is the boundary river of the two empires. Having packed

up a small parcel of provisions, which I knew would be acceptable to General Kmeti, who was in a state of semi-starvation, and what was even more welcome, a quantity of English newspapers that arrived the day before and were consequently invaluable, I started one morning for Perghet, in company with General Brainski, or Shahin Pacha. This officer had been requested by the Muchir to select a proper site for establishing a camp, to which the troops were to be removed as early as the season would permit. This design was, however, frustrated by the weather, for on our arrival at Perghet, we encountered showers of rain and snow, accompanied by a mist, which left us no alternative but to return to Kars, and await a more auspicious day to carry out our respective plans. We therefore returned to head-quarters on the following afternoon.

From Kars to Perghet and the immediate villages, patrols of regular cavalry circulated, but beyond those distances to the river Arpatschai, the guard was intrusted to the irregular Bashi-Bazooks, who were separated by this stream from the Russian foreposts, likewise confided to irregulars. Hassan Yassegi, an Arab partisan chief who was at the head of some twelve hundred followers, commanded the Turkish irregulars at this point.

The fear of falling into the hands of the Cossacks, and, at the same time, the nature of his duties, which

required his presence at every point of the frontier, compelled General Kmeti to shift his quarters very often ; and as the greater part of the villages were deserted by their inhabitants, he was at times reduced to the greatest straits for provisions. Perghet was a choice station, and contained several rich inhabitants who owned large herds of oxen and cows ; the general was thus enabled to offer us a grand banquet of milk and cream-cheese, which with the provisions I had brought with me formed a very fair entertainment.

Ismail Pacha had that morning received important intelligence. The Russians had succeeded, by means of money and intrigues, in organising a general insurrection of the frontier villages on the Turkish territory inhabited by Armenians, who had intrenched themselves, and prepared to resist any attempt offered by the Turks to coerce them. The movement had already gained several villages within a couple of hours ride of Perghet, and was spreading. From the peculiar nature of the houses, which I will describe, cavalry, which was the only arm at hand, would have been unable to bring the inhabitants to reason. The houses were constructed of large stones, and from their character formed in themselves regular fortresses. They had but one door, which led through one or two large stables unprovided with light, whence an aggressor could be assailed with

impunity, into the dwelling-room ; this was generally a small chamber lighted from the top by a little opening. By firmly barricading the door and making loopholes, the inmates could open a fire without the possibility of its being returned with effect by the assailants; and thus these dwellings would be almost impregnable without the aid of artillery. By scaling the roof however, which is constructed of wood covered with earth, and effecting an opening large enough to admit of hand-grenades, the garrison would soon have to submit to terms. It was the intention of General Kmeti to summon the insurgent places to disarm, when their misconduct would be overlooked; but on that being refused, one village would be destroyed as an example to the others.

Of the force of the Russians at Gumri (Alexandropol) and the neighbourhood, nothing could be ascertained by the general. Several of his emissaries were hourly expected with what little information they could glean, but such was the state of penury to which the treasury at Kars had been reduced, that a trustworthy and intelligent spy could not, in default of advance-money, be engaged. The Russians, who it would appear were better supplied with funds, were more fortunate, and not a single event took place at Kars and elsewhere that they were not instantly made acquainted with. In this they were greatly aided by the Greek and Armenian population, who

sympathised almost openly with the cause of the Czar: little traders of these creeds were constantly passing the frontier, and conveyed to General Bebutoff any intelligence of interest. Some of the Turkish frontier villages had constant communications open with Gumri, and the villagers went in and out of that town without restraint. From these people the Turkish irregulars obtained shot and spirits, (for they were great drinkers,) both of these articles being procured in Gumri. The ill-judged restriction of power possessed by the Muchir, greatly facilitated the smuggling of news to the Russians; for that functionary, although he bore the high sounding title of Field-Marshal, had not the power to hang a spy, even when caught in flagrant "délit," and confessing to be in the pay of the enemy. The culprit must be sent to Constantinople for trial, or merely banished into the interior of the country. A spy is hung, not for the wilful pleasure of taking a man's life, but with the object of striking awe into the minds of the treacherous: this the Turks apparently did not understand. Nor perhaps did they reflect, that in sparing a guilty man they encouraged perfidy; and thus, by affording the enemy means of operating to a certainty, they risked drawing upon themselves some sanguinary catastrophe, which the punishment of the spy, legalised by war to the spy, would have prevented.

General Bebutoff, the Russian commander-in-chief, was at this moment in Gumri. He was acquainted with the presence of General Kmeti, on the frontier; but he did not know that the dirty village of Perghet not only contained that gallant Hungarian but also General Brainski, a still bitterer foe, who commenced his national and hereditary war with the Russians under Napoleon in 1812, continued it in the desperate struggle for a national existence, sustained by Poland in the memorable revolution of 1832, and who now, with gray hair, but a heart young with hope and patriotism, was lending his experience to the ill-conditioned army of Anatolia.

Had General Bebutoff known this, perhaps a visit from a pulk of Cossacks would have been the unpleasant result. And I, your humble servant, might have been surprised in the sanguinary conflict I was engaged in with the fleas (who, at Perghet, are as numerous as they are bloodthirsty) and, in spite of affectionate appeals to Lord Palmerston and of energetic declarations of "*Civis Romanus sum*"—I also might have shared the fate of my betters. Perhaps at this moment, instead of calmly insisting on the duty of hanging spies, I might have been mentally revolving in my mind the communication of some future paper to the Royal Geographical Society on the peculiar climate of Siberia and its metal resources, as connected with

the mines of that delightful colony, to be read by Sir Roderick I. Murchison himself, and gently applauded by the amiable and learned members of that learned and amiable association.

At General Kmeti's I met the principal chiefs of the Bashi-Bazooks, who, in point of display, dignity of manners, and general knowledge, greatly surpassed the pachas of the regular army. The whole of the irregulars, as well as the detachments of regular cavalry on the frontiers, were under the orders of Kmeti; who, however, possessed merely a nominal command; for when any dashing razzia on the Russian territory was proposed by him, the principal Bashi-Bazook chief, Hassan Yassegi, generally demurred.

I will attempt to enlighten the reader with respect to the organisation of the Bashi-Bazooks, who have been the subject of so much comment addressed to the British public. In the periodical insurrections in Kurdistan and other provinces of the decaying Turkish empire, the pachas found it convenient to stay the progress of revolt by taking into the pay of government a portion of the idle adventurers of the country, and launching them against the rebels. In time, one or two chieftains arose, who obtained such confidence over the roving population of the East, that no sooner did they unfurl their standard than a small army rushed to join them. With these chiefs the government

entered into contracts, by which, for a stated sum, they bound themselves to raise a mounted corps, which they were to feed and maintain in efficiency.

Two or three of these Bashi-Bazook chieftains were with the army of Kars, and later in the season many others arrived, from Syria and the deserts. Hassan Yassegi had the most numerous band of followers: his force mustered 1200 lances; but government was charged by that ingenious adventurer for 2500 men, which he asserted was the correct number. By dividing the spoils with the high authorities of the army, he succeeded in obtaining his fictitious demand. Hassan Yassegi had been, in his youth, a bold and enterprising man. Gradually riches came to him, and the fire of his spirit was extinguished with the weight of gold. He had now become ambitious, and sought the rank of pacha, and took especial pains not to risk his valuable existence: in a word, he had become an arrant coward. The style in which Hassan Yassegi lived was magnificent. He had silver plate, amber mouth-pieces adorned with diamonds, such as were scarcely possessed by the Padishah himself, Damascus sabres of the most precious description, and an invaluable stud of Arab horses and mares. With all this he did not pay his followers, who were starving, and who had in many instances, been compelled to part with their arms to obtain food for themselves and horses.

A second chieftain was Hadgi Denera, who was the counterpart of Hassan Yassegi, his great rival. Hadgi Denera was the boldest man amongst the Bashi-Bazooks; in magnificence he equalled his rival, and far surpassed him in generosity. With his own dignity and free position he was greatly impressed, and he laughed to scorn the oily pachas and the Muchir at Kars. The band of Denera consisted of 400 picked men, who had the blindest confidence in their leader. The personal appearance of Hadgi Denera was most striking, and rivalled that of the Saladins and Murads of old. These Bashi-Bazook leaders appointed their own officers, and promoted and degraded them at will. The subalterns of Denera were all meritorious men, and had distinguished themselves on more than one occasion. One of these was a magnificent fellow, and the handsomest man I had ever seen. In height, he was above six feet two;—his face was burnt with the sun of the desert, and lighted up with large piercing black eyes. An oval black moustache and beard, carefully trimmed, lent an air of dignity to the melancholic Arabian features. A green turban embroidered with gold adorned his head, and a rich handkerchief with innumerable golden tassels hung over the forehead and partially covered the neck, as a protection from the sun. A gold embroidered vest fitted tightly round the figure of this

eastern warrior, and a silken sash, containing silver-mounted pistols and a glorious yataghan, was bound round his waist. Wide trowsers descended to a little below the knee, gold embroidered gaiters covered the leg, and rich shoes, with gilt spurs, completed the costume. On the shoulders of this splendid barbarian was thrown an ample cloak—a species of bernouse—composed of red cloth, likewise embroidered with gold and silver. He was mounted on a small Arab, whose head and neck were covered with little plates of gold and horse-hair pendants, ornamented with the national crescent and star in massive silver. In his hand this Arab wielded a long lance, with a bush of camel's hair fixed to the point to prevent its penetrating beyond a certain depth.

In the management of the lance, and of their horses, these irregulars were unequalled. The lance is generally from eight to ten feet in length, and is formed of a bamboo, or of the lightest wood that can be procured. This weapon the Arabs twisted round their heads by means of two fingers with great velocity, and then hurled it in the air to an unexpected distance. Sometimes they would catch it in full gallop, or, dropping on their saddles, snatch it from the ground, without dismounting or checking their steeds. The lance was chiefly employed in feint retreats, in which the unfortunate Cossacks had decidedly the worst of it. The Arabs would allow the

yelling Russians to gain upon them, and then, suddenly giving a back thrust with the long deadly spear, transfix the Cossack on the spot.

The Bashi-Bazooks themselves were composed of the most heterogeneous elements. There were Arabs of the desert, proud and valiant—also savages from Kurdistan, both cowardly and knavish. Then there were adventurers from the towns of Syria, and the pachalicks of the East. Men of all trades and classes composed the latter division : lazy peasants, broken down horse-dealers, and adventurous youths formed the majority ; and all these had taken service with their respective leaders in the hope of obtaining Russian plunder and Georgian slaves, but with the firm determination of not fighting. Of all the Bashi-Bazooks, the Arabs were alone trustworthy ; the remainder were worthless, and a considerable nuisance to the army.

Besides the two chieftains I have mentioned, there were several other minor leaders, who had their bands of twenties and hundreds. Each of them, individually, considered himself an equal to the Muchir, and had evidently impressed his followers with the same delusive idea. A very bad feeling reigned amongst these chiefs, who hated each other even more cordially than they detested the Russian Giaours.

The greatest diplomacy was displayed by these

complained sadly of their depredations and tyranny. I had some good opportunities of judging these men, and really they were not so black as they had been painted. In the second campaign, under Kmeti, they completely retrieved their reputation. At Perghet, I met a chief of these men, who with his band had come from the Syrian deserts. He was clad in the flowing brilliant garments of the Arab, which covered his shivering form and painfully contrasted with the deep snow and the howling wind. "I know," he observed in the course of conversation, "that we are despised, but I assure you that, properly commanded and supported, we would rival the Mamelukes of old. Are our horses not as swift, or are we less accustomed to use the lance? But see how we are treated. We leave our homes with a formal engagement with our government, and we are promised eighty piastres the month (about fourteen shillings), provided we bring our horse, our arms, and that we feed ourselves. Now, look at our condition, and say if we are not rather to be pitied than condemned. Government has not paid us; we have spent the little money we possessed and many have sold their arms; then, when abandoned to starvation, can my men be blamed if they help themselves at the villages they may pass to whatever they may meet?" So spoke the old chief, and he was partly right; although famine and hunger cannot

was unhesitatingly believed in Asia, and excited universal delight. The report penetrated to the Russians at Gumri, and depressed the spirits of that garrison proportionately. The communication, which proceeded from the authority of the British consul at Erzeroum—who was misled and disappointed himself—was to the effect that war had been declared by England and France, and that an English division was on its way to Trebizond, *en route* for Kars. I cannot express the joy this intelligence infused in all hearts, and the sudden reaction that took place from the depth of despair to the most sanguine expectation. The subsequent disappointment, which was created by the denial of the latter and most important part of the intelligence, cannot be imagined.

England could never have undertaken a campaign in which her interests were more at stake than in Georgia. By the expulsion of Russia from that province, and the destruction of her strongholds on the Caspian—which, like the Black Sea, has been hitherto a mere Russian lake—the influence of Russia in the East, and her covetous longings towards India, would alike have been dispelled. The fascination with which Russia, by her money or her intrigues more than by force of arms, has enchained Persia and the vast regions bordering the Caspian, would have snapped asunder, and the prestige of England have risen, if

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possible, still higher. At the same time the difficulties to be overcome by force of arms were trifling, when compared with the largeness of the stake at issue.

The Russian army in Georgia, that could have been brought to bear against an attack, did not exceed 17,000; but allowing that the garrisons of the forts had been weakened, and the division that was charged with the dangerous mission of watching Schamyl had been reduced, even then the force would have been under 25,000. The roads were good; there were no mountains to scale, no vast rivers to check an advance, but a beautiful and fertile plain and a friendly population. The position which would have promised the most speedy defeat of the enemy was this: the centre would have advanced from Kars, and the wings from Ardahan and Bayazid, and thus have concentrated before Tiflis, where the enemy would probably have given battle. From Ardahan the point of attack would have been Ahkiska; from Bayazid, Erivan.

The centre from Kars would have been opposed by Alexandropol (Gumri), a fortress of great strength. This fort would, however, have surrendered on the taking of Tiflis, and the present Turkish army might have been occupied in watching that garrison, and thus enabled the British allied troops to outflank that fortress, and advance on Tiflis. The Russians would have been either obliged to abandon the capital of Georgia and retreat, or have been forced to give

battle before its walls. Then, in case of a defeat, the dispersed enemy would have been at the tender mercies of Schamyl and an insurgent population. Tiflis is not fortified, and lies in the centre of a large plain. The only fortress of real importance in the country is the above-named Gumri. Once in Georgia provisions would have been found in abundance.

I do not hesitate to say, that the greatest difficulty of the expedition lay in the advance from Trebizond to the frontiers. The snow was deep on the mountains, and the scarcity of accommodation on the way, in the shape of villages, would have severely tried our men. Then, again, the troops would have been entering a land of famine, and the commissariat departments would have been sorely tried. Still an allied division might have remained at Trebizond until the season would have allowed of going into camp and undertaking a march direct to Kars. At Trebizond the weather was already mild, and the country about rejoicing in spring; when at Kars and Erzeroum, where we were some seven thousand feet higher, the snow was still falling, and whirlwinds were scouring the snow-covered plain. At Trebizond provisions would have been found in abundance, whilst in Kars there was actually nothing.

Whilst the troops and the pachas were rejoicing at the prospect of receiving the assistance of the Allies in the approaching campaign, reinforcements

commenced arriving at Kars, notwithstanding the severity of the weather. Unfortunately, the greater part of the new arrivals were rediffs.

These are soldiers who, having served the time of five years required of the Turkish conscript, have returned to their homes, and have married, and engaged themselves either in petty trading or in agriculture. They form, in fact, a reserve similar to that of the Prussian Landwehr. It cannot be expected that men who have been taken from their families and their peaceful occupations, and whose thoughts are bent towards home, will charge a battery or expose their lives with any feelings of pleasure. Their existence, in fact, may be said to belong to their families as well as to themselves. It would, therefore, be unadvisable to depend upon the rediffs, beyond performing garrison duty, or, at the utmost, in fighting behind stone walls.

The fortifications in course of construction on the Kara-dagh, were carried on with great vigour, and, before the end of May that height was covered with a succession of redoubts; upon which, however, no cannon were for the moment mounted. Some pieces of large calibre, were expected to arrive daily; but that consideration would scarcely have prevented the advance of the Russians, had they been so disposed.

A singular accident, to which I have already alluded, occurred to Ismail Pacha (Kmeti) on his

return from inspecting the works in question. The houses in this part of Kars are roofed with earth, and sometimes run parallel with the road; consequently, several house-tops are often passed without the pedestrian or horseman having the remotest idea thereof. Ismail Pacha was riding a spirited horse, and suddenly felt himself sinking into the earth; in fact, he and his horse had fallen through a roof and were precipitated into the room below, a height of ten feet. This room was the harem, in which a lady was quietly embroidering. The lady at once rushed to the assistance of the intruder, notwithstanding the nervous shock she must have sustained at this unexpected apparition.

This tableau will be of inestimable value to the novelist or dramatic author; for even the most imaginative of the poets of the Porte St. Martin school have never dreamt of a gentleman penetrating to a lady's chamber on horseback, and through the roof!

Fortunately, the rider escaped with a slight concussion; and the horse, which had fallen on its fore-feet and then rolled over, was unhurt.

From Erivan, news was brought of the extreme heat which reigned there already, although we at Kars were still in the midst of ice and snow. The Russians nightly threw up rockets in that direction; with what object was not ascertained. Their force

CHAPTER XVI.

SPRING.—THE RAMAZAN.

IN the four first days of May—a month which was certainly not distinguished at Kars by any incident of a very merry nature—we enjoyed beautiful sunny weather, which tempted the unfortunate inhabitants and strangers to indulge in the long smothered hope that spring was at length approaching. The heat of the sun had already operated favourably on the snow-covered plains, and its supremacy was established by the muddy colour of the swift-flowing river Kars-tschai (whose waters, by-the-by, we were condemned to drink) and by numerous improvised lakes which afforded a joyful refuge to colonies of water-fowl. The tips of the smaller mountains which encircle the plain were dotted with black spots, but the higher ones still exulted in their virgin purity and laughed to scorn the feeble efforts of a May sun. In these regions, what would tax the powers of the solar rays weeks to perform, is accomplished in a single day and night by heavy showers of rain. These showers

completely disperse and melt the snow, and transform it into a still less desirable mire. The mud in time becomes hardened, or is washed away; but that period is more fatal to military operations than one of snow. In the town of Kars we were already in the enjoyment of spring, and the roofs of the houses were covered with green tents, to which the soldiers resorted in order to escape the pestilential interior of the dwellings. The appearance of these tents—a town above a town—was striking and picturesque.

I ought scarcely to denominate the change of season which we had undergone as the approach of spring, for we were in a single week transported from ice and cold to a heat scarcely supportable, and mud unfathomable. The rains continued for a fortnight, and then a series of fine days speedily hardened the marshy plain, which ere long presented a beautiful appearance when the grass commenced to push above the soil. At this period, those peasants who were not disheartened at the prospects of the war, brought to light their rude implements of industry—which have not changed their form of construction since the early days of Armenian history—and commenced tilling the ground and sowing their crops. Everything in the army assumed a more cheerful appearance. Sickness decreased, and the invalided soldiers were enabled to creep from the pestiferous mosques that had been transformed into hospitals,

and enjoy once more the beneficial warmth of the sun. Provisions commenced pouring into Kars with greater abundance, and reinforcements were reported to be on the road to Erzeroum, bound for our camp. The inhabitants of Kars seemed to be awakened from a long slumber; they appeared from their mud-roofed dwellings in numbers quite unexpected, and employed themselves in clearing their houses of the accumulated winter filth. The female population also commenced exercising their industrial tastes in fabricating cakes of tezek, which is nothing less than the sweepings of the stables, and which these romantic maidens handled with remarkable dexterity.

This tezek is coaxed into little square cakes, and carefully laid out to dry on the roofs of the houses; being finally packed away for the approaching winter, when it is consumed in lieu of fire-wood. The tezek of the camel is more valuable, and after being dried in round little cakes, is employed in lighting the narghilé, or water-pipe. In some of the villages the inhabitants hold a common stock of tezek, which is piled up to an immense height, and from the distance has the appearance of a landmark.

No sooner had the grass appeared above the surface of the damp earth than, as by common accord, all the stables of the town opened, and solemn processions of gaunt buffaloes, half-starved oxen, asses, and horses, proceeded to the plains, to seek a little nourishing

food. Many of these miserable animals had not sufficient strength to crawl through the streets, that were literally swimming in mud, and dropped down exhausted. The humanity of the Turk is doubtful. He will refuse to kill an animal that is not needed for consumption, and, in order not to transgress, will allow unfortunate cattle to expire in lengthened agony rather than shorten their sufferings by a rapid death. The streets of the town were, I have remarked, in a most filthy condition ; and no steps were taken to abate the nuisance : the mud was above the knees in most places, and exhaled disgusting and unwholesome smells. The dead bodies of dogs were allowed to lie rotting in the sun, beside half-devoured carcasses of horses and cattle ; and their removal, and the cleansing of the streets, were undreamt of. In the East, one does not expect to find absolute cleanliness ; but methought common sense, in the absence of commissioners of sewers, would have dictated the removal of pestilential filth, prejudicial to the health both of the population and of the army. But in the East, alas ! common sense is a plant of rare growth, choked by the rank weeds of custom and indolence.

With the fine weather, the fortifications around the town progressed more rapidly. Those on the Kara-dagh advanced with particular energy, now that the snow had partially disappeared. The absence

of pioneers, none of which were attached to this army, and the want of proper implements, somewhat retarded the progress of the working parties, for the stones employed were brought on the shoulders of the men, whilst the contrivances to carry the earth were still more rude. I have already detailed the works and redoubts that were in course of construction, and if they were neither first-rate in design or in execution, it must be remembered that no engineer of capacity was present with the army, to plan and superintend their erection: we were sadly in want of a Todleben. It was, however, necessary that these works should be constructed, for as an advance into the enemy's country was for the moment out of the question, owing to the numerical weakness and disorganised state of this army, it was essential that the place should be put into a proper state of defence, to resist the enemy should he have advanced. The possession of the Kara-dagh would have placed the town at the mercy of the foe, but, fortunately, the present works prevented any attempt in that direction. In the year 1832, the Russians advanced across the plain, and established their batteries on another height, which commands the town and castle. Of course the place surrendered. From its being commanded on every point, Kars is defenceless, and to render it a position of any strength, great expense must be incurred, and much

time expended. Owing to its strategic importance, it seems unaccountable that the defences of Kars should, hitherto, have been thus neglected; and we must hope, that the war once concluded, Turkey will have been awakened to her precarious position, and will turn her attention to its improvement.

At Kars, an intrenched camp, capable of holding a respectable army, should be constructed; whilst Erzeroum should be regularly fortified. At the latter place, proper magazines and foundries should be established; and thus interrupted communications by sea with Constantinople would not paralyse the army. At present, Erzeroum depends on Constantinople even for a gun or a pound of gunpowder; and, with regard to provisions, it lives from day to day, and to-morrow may starve. Smaller batteries had now been constructed on the most assailable points, and everything prepared to give the Russians a warm reception.

On the 25th of April, great excitement was created in the town by the report that five regiments of Cossacks had crossed the Arpa-tschai, and formed the van of an invading force. The truth was this—250 Cossacks had crossed that river, and entered the Armenian villages, which I have recorded as being in a state of insurrection against the Turkish authorities. Their presence was probably to carry off the stores collected in those villages, and which, it was

feared, might fall into the hands of our irregulars. Part of their project was, perhaps, to persuade the inhabitants to enter Georgia and become Russian subjects—that having been a favourite and successful policy of Prince Woronzoff. Its success was doubtful this time; for, in my opinion, these villages had accepted arms from the Russians more with the intention of repelling the outrages of the Turkish bashi-bazooks, irregulars, than from a wish to change masters.

As Turkish subjects, the Armenians — and, in fact, all Christians—enjoy great toleration and many privileges. I have not heard of any religious persecution having taken place for many years past; and, with regard to civil rights, the Christians possess them beyond the native Turks. Where, for a crime, the latter would receive the bastinado, the Christian often escapes; owing to the dislike of the authorities to enter the lists with officious consular agents, to whom the latter may appeal, and also to avoid the charge of religious persecution. That the Turk hates the Christian, is as patent as the hatred of the Christian to the Mussulman; and I regret to remark, that the contempt for the Giaour which animates the Turk, is often merited by the Eastern representatives of Christianity. Were the Mussulman to encounter real piety and an honourable example, this contempt would give way to a respectful admiration, of which the national character is

susceptible. The Christian population are here exempt from conscription, whilst, as Russian subjects, they would have to swell the number of victims to the Czar's ambitious instincts. * That the Armenians are themselves alive to the advantages of living under Turkish dominion, the following fact will attest:—An order was issued at Kars that all Russian subjects should quit the Turkish territory within twenty-one days. This measure principally affected the inhabitants of Gumri and the neighbourhood; which districts, till within a few years, formed part of Turkey. These people had now petitioned to remain, and requested to be naturalised Turkish subjects. A more significant fact was the proposal made by an influential Armenian chief, to raise a corps of his co-religionists to march against the Russians.

An absurd report was circulated here to the effect that Selim Pacha had advanced from Batoum, and had taken Akhalsik. Of course this intelligence was unfounded, but it illustrates the recklessness of the Ottoman commanders in Asia. Akhalsik faces Ardahan, where was posted the left wing of the Kars army, and yet no communication existed between our head-quarters and that of the Turkish corps, although only a distance of twelve hours separated the two towns.

* A recent law empowers the Rayahs to serve in the Ottoman army—a doubtful advantage.

Permission was at length wrested from the Muchir to allow the troops to practice target-shooting: hitherto, the greater portion of the army had not fired a musket for months.

It was now remarked with regret, that the Muchir Zarif Pacha had fallen into the hands of the Turkish party, who viewed with repugnance the presence in Kars of European officers. By his refusal to adopt measures necessary to the reorganisation of the army, he neutralised the good effect that the experience of these officers might have produced, and thus incurred a grave responsibility. Considerable blame must be attached to the authorities at Stamboul, who had named as commander-in-chief of an imperial army a person who, having never served, was totally ignorant of military matters, and who ought never to have been placed at the head of a defective and disorganised army. With the best intentions in the world the Muchir could not have succeeded, for the present critical state of the army required a hand of iron and an experienced mind, whilst a more unsuitable or ungrateful place for a civilian to occupy could not well be imagined.

Such was the deplorable mismanagement of the espionage system in the army of Kars, that we were actually ignorant of the strength of the army at Gumri, which was not twelve leagues distant from the town, and was the strategic point of the Russians.

The agents employed were mostly peasants, who, being totally ignorant of military matters, and from not receiving proper instructions as to the object of their missions, generally returned with the most trivial or contradictory intelligence. Of two spies who returned in the last week of April, one described the forces of the enemy at Gumri to be 8000 strong, whilst the other gave their number to be 25,000. The agents were pitifully paid, and the odds are that they rendered to the enemy more faithful service than to the Turks. The Russians, on the contrary, had active and intelligent agents, and not a movement took place here with which they were not instantly acquainted; the advantage they possessed was therefore obvious, and it was numerical weakness alone that prevented their advance. The Turks were hampered with another disadvantage in the absurd number of general officers with the army, who, by their diversity of opinion, frustrated any serious operations. Of generals of division and brigadier-generals, there were not less than twenty-three; and, on the whole, a more ignorant and incapable body could not have existed.

These gentlemen formed a *medglis* or council, where every movement was debated; the consequence was, that if perchance an expedition had been decided on, the whole town and army were cognisant of the fact, and before an hour had elapsed

were actively canvassing its merits. In military operations success is chiefly dependent on secrecy and expedition, but in Kars those virtues were perhaps ignored—certainly unpractised. One day General Guyon proposed in the council an expedition against Erivan, which was weakly garrisoned; strengthening his argument that thereby the soldiers would be encouraged to undertake a still more decided blow. The native pachas refused to listen to any suggestion for a movement, and thus this proposal, like many other useful ones, was shelved. Before the expiration of an hour this fact was known in the town, and by another week the garrison of Erivan received strong reinforcements.

Previous to this occurrence, it had been proposed to march on Akhal-kalaki, where a few hundred Russians only were lying, and which was a point of some strategic importance. The proposal was adopted; but instead of sending off a flying column to surprise the place and capture the weak garrison, a general was despatched first to reconnoitre the ground. The Russians, made aware of the reconnoissance, instantly marched 8000 men to the spot, so that the expedition was no more feasible; and, at the same time, the Turkish left wing at Ardahan was threatened. Without a total change in the present system, matters will never improve in Turkey. The Muchir should be a man of energy and experience, and pos-

sess unlimited powers, whilst it is imperative that the medglis be abolished.

The army had now been strengthened by several battalions arrived from Erzeroum, and 9000 rediffs were expected shortly: the latter were proceeding from Sivas. A body of Bashi-Bazooks, 1200 strong, arrived in Kars at the end of April, and were instantly sent forward to the extreme advanced guard. Their arrival puzzled the Russians at Gumri, who were not quite certain if the whole Turkish army was not in motion. They dispatched a reconnoissance, protected by a regiment of Cossacks, which crossed the Arpa-tschai, but the whole party retired on the Bashi-Bazooks making their appearance. This easy triumph had greatly elated the latter irregular gentry.

A Mahometan officer in the Russian service deserted towards the commencement of May, and every day stray deserters arrived. They were well rewarded here; and no doubt the excellent reception they had met with would have operated to a great extent in the enemy's ranks, had it not been discovered that several deserters who had succeeded in crossing the Arpa-tschai and in reaching the Turkish outposts, had been given up to the Russian authorities, against a reward, by the Bashi-Bazooks. The above officer, a fine-looking man, decorated with three Russian orders, had been for some time in

correspondence with the Turks, and was to have deserted with twenty-five men, likewise Mahometans; but the latter were prevented from crossing the Arpa-tschai, which at that moment was much swollen, and very rapid. As yet, not a single Pole, of which nation the Russian army in Georgia was principally composed, had come over to the Turks.

Many rumours were current in Kars respecting a reported change of commanders. One of these idle reports was to the effect that Marshal St. Arnaud was to take the command, not only of the allied armies, but also of the Turkish forces on the Danube, and that Omar Pacha would be named generalissimo of both the armies of Asia—of that of Kars and of Batoum. Had this really been confirmed, then our prospects would have brightened; and an energetic movement of the two corps would, if skilfully directed, have driven the enemy into the Caspian Sea.

I have already mentioned that provisions were pouring in rapidly. Every day wheat and barley arrived by a diversity of conveyances. Long strings of awkward-looking camels stalked through the narrow streets, with majestic indifference to the trepidation their unusual presence excited in all the horses they encountered. Then a long line of little carts, mounted on wheels of massive wood, similar to those employed in Portugal, and drawn by oxen,

arrived with their noisy drivers ; whilst from some places where the passage of carts was impossible, troops of shod oxen, heavily laden, brought in their contributions. The health of the army had greatly improved, and typhus had nearly disappeared : many cases of diarrhœa and scurvy, however, were still reported. The latter evil declined in time, for the plain of Kars furnished a variety of species of greens, which the soldiers collected and eat with avidity.

Two new battalions of Chasseurs, on the Vincennes model, were now being formed, and exercised daily in the intricate evolutions peculiar to that body : a battalion that had been some time in existence displayed considerable activity, and was not far behind its model. It certainly was most amusing to witness the grave Turks jumping about in every conceivable posture, without varying the solemnity of their features. It is doubtless desirable to possess troops combining great rapidity of movement with a deadly skill as marksmen ; still I could not help thinking many of the gymnastic positions *de trop*. I doubt if in action, with a regiment of hussars as skirmishers coming down upon them, that the monkey-like jumps, which have great effect on drill, would be resorted to by the men.

Towards the commencement of May, it was feared by the Muchir that an advance of the enemy on Kars was imminent. The apprehension of an attack from

the Russian forces concentrated at Gumri had for the time a most wholesome effect, and roused the activity of the Turks. The fortifications of the Kara-dagh, and on the other eminences dominating the town and plain, were pursued with remarkable vigour, and a few days witnessed their termination. On the Kara-dagh two regiments had been constantly at work, and the labour they had performed was really wonderful: twelve heavy pieces were mounted in the works, and fresh ones were daily dragged up the steep height. Kars was now safe from any *coup de main* on the part of the enemy; and whilst a fortnight previous a Russian attack would have met with probable success, at the present moment it would have resulted in certain failure. General Bebutoff had allowed a splendid chance to escape him, and one which never returned. Had he surrounded the town with his Cossacks, and have cut off all supplies from reaching it, the army would have been starved in three days into capitulation. The snow would have prevented the Turkish artillery and infantry from manœuvring, whilst the cavalry was not sufficient enough to have offered serious or protracted resistance.

The out-door work to which the soldiers had lately been subjected, had a most beneficial effect on their health and spirits. The latter had moreover been heightened by the arrival of remittances from Con-

stantinople, so that the long arrears of pay owing to the men were somewhat reduced. I cannot too often repeat my admiration of the patience and goodwill of which this army had given touching proofs, during the long period of misery and neglect to which it had been shamefully subjected. Within six months it had suffered every evil to which an army could be liable: typhus and famine had sacrificed 6000 victims, yet the spirit of the survivors was undaunted. With the buoyant spirits peculiar to the Turk and Arab, all past sufferings had passed into oblivion, and the prospect of receiving a few months' pay had spread cheerfulness and satisfaction over all.

The amount received by the Mustechar in silver and in paper-money was 17,000 purses, or about 85,000*l*. This was the first trial attempted by the authorities of Constantinople, to introduce a paper currency into this part of the empire; and, at first, its circulation encountered considerable opposition: the population would not readily understand that a crumpled piece of paper represented the same value as the large beschlick pieces to which they were accustomed; but, with a little tact, the authorities facilitated the acceptance of the paper. They announced that taxes and dues would be encashed only in paper, and that was a stimulant to the circulation of the latter. When the paper-money,

which consisted of bank notes of the respective value of ten and twenty piastres, or 1*s.* 8*d.* and 3*s.* 4*d.* made their first appearance, the traders in the bazaars closed their stores, and refused to sell their wares at any price. This was occasioned by the soldiers presenting their bank notes, and after purchasing some trifling article of the value of a penny, demanding their change in silver. In time the bazaars opened again, and the paper money was taken without hesitation. The value of gold coins, however, augmented rapidly: sovereigns obtained 135 piastres, or 22*s.* 6*d.*; and French Louis d'ors, or Russian coins, were proportionally in demand. I am not prepared to say that the measure of introducing a paper currency, beyond Constantinople, was either statesmanlike or praiseworthy; on the contrary, I fear that the acceptance in the provinces of these notes, only provoked further issues, and that the financial position of the empire became still more entangled, and its resources still more severely taxed. Whether the government will sustain its credit, or whether these notes will be doomed to the same fate as the French assignats, or the American revolutionary bonds, time alone will show; but they certainly procured food for this army, and in alleviating its necessitous position, rendered the future more cheering. Thus, none at Kars complained, and much good was really effected.

Before the end of May we had witnessed our deliverance from snow, and, by the heat of the sun and a few heavy showers, the plain had been metamorphosed into one vast mass of mud. All military operations had consequently been rendered out of the question.

Within a mile or two of Kars, the ground, from its stony nature, was comparatively free of mud, and here the cavalry and artillery exercised. Of the cavalry I have often recorded my opinion; and, from what I subsequently witnessed, my ideas have not changed: I consider this arm of the Turkish service totally inefficient. The men sit badly, manœuvre still worse, and, to order them to charge a Russian light cavalry regiment, not to speak of a heavy one, would be despatching them to certain destruction; the sabres of the men were ridiculously short, and they were completely ignorant of their use. The real strength in cavalry lay in the Bashi-Bazooks, if that very irregular body could have been brought into a slight state of discipline. Too much drill would have spoilt the wild energy of the men; but by accustoming them to operate in concert, and with infantry, the regular army would have obtained a valuable auxiliary. Of the artillery I have always spoken highly; and, from the orderly condition of the harness, the appearance of the pieces, and the soldierly bearing of the men, I think many of the

European armies might have derived a salutary example. There reigned an *esprit de corps* in this arm, which increased its efficiency.

A regiment of rediffs had been called in from the villages where it had been quartered during the winter months, and encamped on the plain, under shelter of the Kara-dagh. This regiment started in a few days for Ardahan, and increased the strength of our left wing.

We were still without intelligence from Schamyl. Three of his emissaries had been arrested, one after the other, at Tiflis, and we were ignorant of his movements. The snow and mud prevented him from undertaking any decided movement; but, at the same time, his name alone demanded a constant army of observation, which weakened the Russian forces, and prevented them from acting on this side with energy.

A pontoon-bridge, which had been for some time in course of construction, was completed at this period; and to test its solidity, it had been thrown across the Kars-tschai. The trial was very satisfactory: a squadron of cavalry, with a field battery, passed over it with safety. The bridge was short, but the rivers which flow between this and Tiflis are insignificant and narrow. A great crowd assembled to witness the trial, and the novelty of the proceedings greatly delighted the solemn

ficent Baltic fleet steaming up the Sound, headed by the huge *Duke of Wellington* with "Sir Charlie" himself on the quarter-deck, aroused more admiration in the minds of the northern spectators than did these two tiny punts in the unsophisticated imaginations of the good people of Kars. The officer, Major Sheidenberg, who had superintended the construction of the bridge and boats, was looked upon as a magician, and as rather a dangerous character.

In the last week of May, the whole army of Kars quitted the pestilential town, and encamped on the plain outside. In their tent arrangements the Turks are famous, and the expedition and neatness with which they raised the encampment in question were remarkable.

The long lines of green and white tents, and the handsome ones occupied by the superior officers, presented a very picturesque appearance; while to the men, this change from the infected and filthy town to the pure air speedily proved beneficial. The encampment was merely temporary, and was established chiefly with the view of concentrating the troops that had been quartered during the winter months in the surrounding villages, and to stay the progress of typhus, which raged with intensity in the town.

The intelligence of the approaching arrival of the

splendour with which Stamboul adorns herself on that memorable night, could not be imitated by the pretty town of Kars; still a little festive display was created. Three cannon were discharged, which alarmed all the female and not a few of the male population, as the reports were echoed and re-echoed by the surrounding hills. A battle near Kars would be a terrible affair, and, from the formidable echoes, both armies would stand an excellent chance of becoming stone deaf.

The castle was magnificently illuminated with seven small lamps, which succumbed after an heroic struggle with the pitiless rain. The inhabitants brought out all their fire-arms, and commenced an irregular *feu-de-joie*. Veteran rifles and antiquated pistols thus came again to light, and the air was filled with reports, not sharp and honest, but such as left the mind filled with hesitation, and inspired considerable doubts whether the weapon and the luckless true believer who wielded it were still in existence. In time, the inhabitants exhausted their stock of gunpowder, and retired within doors. The town recovered its usual tranquillity; the sentinels, who had been awakened by the noise, reseated themselves in their comfortable seat-provided boxes, and went off to the land of dreams; the dogs renewed their nightly Oriental concert; and no one would have dreamt that three minutes before the

town of Kars had been the scene of such extensive jollification. Colonel Thorne, who from his house possessed an excellent view of the castle, and who had anticipated some magnificent displays of fireworks, had invited a party of friends to witness the affair. The disappointment was, however, borne by all with becoming fortitude.

END OF VOL. I.



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